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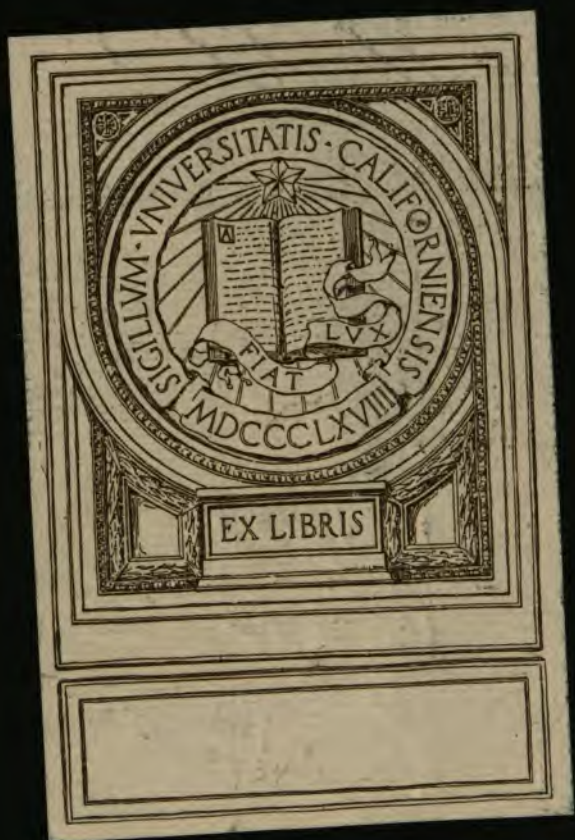
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AN IRREGULAR CORPS
IN MATABELELAND
LIEUT.-COL. PLUMER







AN IRREGULAR CORPS IN
MATABELELAND

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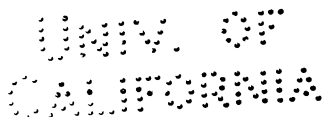
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AN
IRREGULAR CORPS
IN
MATABELELAND

BY
LIEUT.-COL. HERBERT PLUMER
Commanding Matabeleland Relief Force
(MAJOR, YORK AND LANCASTER REGIMENT)



LONDON
KEGAN PAUL, TRENCH, TRÜBNER & Co., LTD.
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AN IRREGULAR CORPS
IN MATABELELAND

CHAPTER I.

INTRODUCTORY.

THE news which was flashed down from Bulawayo at the latter part of March, 1896, that the Matabele had risen in revolt against the authority of the British South Africa Company, and had expressed their determination to exterminate all the white settlers in the country, caused the utmost consternation, not only throughout South Africa, but in England; and, indeed, it was hardly possible to exaggerate the gravity of the situation. The picture of the small population in that country, among whom were many women and children, exposed to the fanatical fury of a savage race, famed for their ferocities and cruelties, with the long stretch of over 500 miles between them and the nearest place from which reinforcements could be sent, was horrible to contemplate; and the

anxiety as to whether, with their limited resources of men and arms, they would be able to hold out until those reinforcements arrived was proportionally intense.

I was to a certain extent in a position to judge what those resources were. After the incursion into the Transvaal by Dr. Jameson's troops, and their subsequent surrender, a wild rumour was afloat to the effect that 1000 armed volunteers from Rhodesia were in readiness to take the field, and intended to march into the Transvaal to rescue Jameson and his fellow-prisoners; and I was despatched to Bulawayo to warn, in Her Majesty's name, any British subjects against taking part in any such movements, and to take over on behalf of the Imperial Government all ammunition and ordnance, the property of the British South Africa Company. The arms and ammunition that were in the country in February were as follows :—

GUNS.

AT BULAWAYO.

2·5" R. M. L.	. 1	45 Maxims	. 2
2·5" R. B. L.	. 1	303 „	. 2
7-pr. R. M. L.	. 4	Gardner	. 1
12-pr. Q. F.	. 1*	Gatling	. 1
1-pr. Hotchkiss	. 1	Nordenfeldt	. 1
Total			15

* The carriage for this gun was at Mafeking.

There was very little ammunition for any of the guns except the Hotchkiss, and none at all for the 12-pr. The machine-gun ammunition is given below.

In Mashonaland there were two '303 Maxims at Salisbury, and one 7-pr. gun at Umtali.

RIFLES AND CARBINES.

MATABELELAND.

	M. H.		L. M.	L. M. Carbines.
At Bulawayo	. *100	...	394	... 140
„ Gwelo	. —	...	40	... —
„ Belingwe	. —	...	20	... —
	<u>100</u>	...	<u>454</u>	... <u>140</u>

MASHONALAND.

			L. M.
At Salisbury	.	.	293
„ Victoria	.	.	50
„ Umtali	.	.	<u>100</u>
			443

There were in addition a number of private guns and rifles whose numbers it is difficult to estimate.

AMMUNITION.

BULAWAYO.

M. H.	L. M.	Maxim.	
		'303	'45
446,600	... 830,430	... 130,275	... 65,000
Gardner and Gatling	.	.	17,300

There were only small quantities of ammunition at Gwelo and Belingwe.

* Some of these were subsequently given to the police.

IN MASHONALAND.

At Salisbury	.	.	.	63,000	} L. M.
„ Victoria	.	.	.	16,500	
„ Umtali	.	.	.	9,000	

As regards the men available nearly all the Matabeleland Mounted Police, the corps of white police raised for the protection of life and property in the country, had accompanied Dr. Jameson into the Transvaal, and after their departure there were only about fifteen left, though efforts were being made to gradually increase this number to something like an adequate strength pending the return of the others from England. It had not been decided what the fixed establishment should be, as it was intended to gradually reduce their numbers and to supplement them by a corps of Native Police, from whom much was expected. By the beginning of February considerable progress had been made in recruiting and organizing this native corps, some 300 or 400 having been enrolled, and these numbers were subsequently increased. They certainly showed themselves wonderfully quick in acquiring a knowledge of drill, and presented a very soldier-like appearance on parade and when marching through the town.

In the absence of the Mounted Police the only white force in the country was the Rhodesian Horse Volunteers—a mounted infantry corps—

to which most of the citizens of Bulawayo and a good many prospectors and others belonged. It was difficult to ascertain what number of these would be available, so many of those borne on the rolls being temporarily absent from various causes; but probably not more than about 300 were on the spot. There were about 300 horses belonging to the corps, but they were mostly in very poor condition; they had evidently been hurriedly collected together, and the best had been taken into the Transvaal with Dr. Jameson's force.

The white population of Bulawayo and the neighbourhood probably consisted of about 1400 men and 800 women and children, and there were some 200 Colonial natives employed in various capacities. Matters were going on prosperously enough in the country until the beginning of March, when there was a report, which proved only too well founded, that cattle on a certain farm some ten miles from Bulawayo had been struck down with rinderpest. The disease spread all over the country with extraordinary rapidity, and notwithstanding the efforts made to stamp it out by slaughtering all cattle within infected areas, many thousands soon succumbed. The infection travelled rapidly southward into Khama's country, and all along the road to Mafeking team after team broke down, the oxen dying one after

another, and the wagons and their contents being left stranded on the veldt.

It was at this juncture, when everything seemed to have combined to place the white population of Matabeleland at a disadvantage, that the natives made their effort to oust them from the country. The Matabele had made all their preparations with great secrecy. To ordinary observers there was nothing in the demeanour of the natives to indicate discontent or disaffection, and even men like Selous, Napier, and others, who had lived amongst them for some time, failed to see any signs of the storm that was brewing. In February there was a report in Bulawayo to the effect that the Matabele were collecting in large numbers in the Matoppos Hills; but the police who were sent to inquire into this reported that the natives were only collecting for a big "dance," and as at this time it is customary for them to hold an annual "dance" for the first-fruits of the harvest, this was accepted as accounting for the gathering. It is, however, difficult to understand how all the preparations made for a rising failed to attract the attention of all the Native Commissioners in the various districts—men whose duty it was to maintain a most careful supervision over all the movements of the natives, and who had special opportunities for observing and studying their habits.

There were probably many causes for the rising.

In the first place, though Bulawayo had been taken and Lobengula the king driven from the country in 1893, the Matabele had not really been conquered; many of the tribes had never fought at all, and though surprised into submission by the white men's sudden occupation of their capital and the flight of their chief, they still believed themselves capable of holding their own if opportunity should arise. The injudicious manner in which the authorities exacted the tribute of cattle fixed as a war indemnity, making as they did periodical demands for a certain number of head from each district, was a perpetual source of irritation among the Matabele, and led to the belief that the real intention of the Company was to gradually deprive them of all the capital and power which the possession of cattle meant. Finally, the rinderpest and the stringent measures adopted in the hope of its suppression, the necessity for which they did not understand and which was never properly explained to them, brought matters to a head. There were possibly many other local and individual grievances, but the above were probably the main considerations which influenced the rank and file of the nation and induced them to listen to the counsels of the "M'limos," or witch-doctors, and others, who urged them to strike a blow now, when, with the departure of all the police from the country, the white men were at their mercy.

On the 25th March the first outrages occurred in the Filabusi and Inseza districts, about eighty miles south-east of Bulawayo, and near the eastern extremity of the Matoppo Hills. It was soon evident that this was no mere local disturbance as was at first hoped, and other outrages in all parts of the country followed in rapid succession. Mr. Selous' farm at Essex Vale, only twenty-two miles east of Bulawayo, was raided and burnt, he and Mrs. Selous narrowly escaping with their lives; while at Inyati, a mission station forty miles to the north, Mr. Graham, Assistant Native Commissioner, and five other whites were attacked and killed; and still further north, on the Shangani river, other outrages were reported. Parties from Bulawayo were sent out to bring in all the settlers and their families from the outlying districts, and several sharp engagements took place before this could be accomplished, all these being graphically described in Mr. Selous' book, *Sunshine and Storm in Rhodesia*.

Mr. Duncan, who had come to Bulawayo from Salisbury, was the head of the Administration in Matabeleland, and at his request Captain Nicholson of the 7th Hussars, who had relieved me in charge of the ordnance and ammunition in Bulawayo, and who was the only Imperial officer on the spot, acted as his military adviser, and superintended all the arrangements for the defence of the town.

He had at once, on his own responsibility, issued the necessary arms and ammunition from the magazines.

The Rhodesian Horse Volunteers were disbanded, and a force was raised in Bulawayo known as the Bulawayo Field Force, in which nearly all men capable of bearing arms were enrolled for the defence of the town and the country. Colonel Napier, as senior officer, was appointed commandant, and Colonel Spreckley second in command; other prominent officers who joined being Captain M'Farlane, formerly in the 9th Lancers, the Hon. M. Gifford, Captains Grey, Selous, Mainwaring, Brand, Carden, and Llewellyn.

Many of the native police joined the rebels immediately, to whom, with their military training and knowledge of the resources and movements of the defenders, they were a great assistance. All that remained, though many were professedly loyal, were promptly disarmed. Mr. Rhodes, who had arrived at Salisbury from Beira, immediately started for Gwelo with a detachment of 150 men, hurriedly despatched for the relief of that place, which at first was garrisoned by about 80 men, these numbers swelling to something like 250 as the prospectors and others poured in from the various mines and farms in the district. Belingwe, about 90 miles east of Bulawayo, was held and prepared for defence by a small party of 44 men,

under Captain Laing. In both this place and Gwelo a number of private rifles were brought in, and in each there were sufficient supplies to last nearly two months.

As soon as it became evident in Bulawayo that the rising was more or less general, Mr. Duncan and those assisting him realized that the troops available in the country were quite inadequate to make much head against it, and that they could not hope to do more than rescue any of the settlers and their families who were still in the outlying districts, and hold Bulawayo and Gwelo against any attacks that might be made against them until reinforcements could arrive. This in itself was a sufficiently formidable task considering the small number of men and rifles available, the numbers of women and children whose safety had to be secured, and the length of time that must necessarily elapse before, under the most favourable circumstances, any troops from the south could reach Bulawayo.

Most fortunately the Matabele never seriously attempted to interfere with the telegraph wires to Mafeking, though the one to Gwelo was cut on the 31st March, for what reason is still uncertain, but probably from some superstitious dread of what might happen to any disturber of the white man's mysterious method of talking. It can be readily understood how seriously the difficulties of the

situation would have been increased if telegraphic communication had been interrupted between Bulawayo and the south.

Mr. Duncan, on the 29th March, telegraphed to Colonel Harris at Kimberley, asking him to undertake to raise, arm, equip, and despatch to Bulawayo as speedily as possible a force of 500 mounted men. Colonel Harris is the Commandant of the Diamond Fields Horse, and also of the Volunteer Brigade at Kimberley, and from his position there and the material at his command would have had no difficulty in raising the required numbers.

The Secretary of State for the Colonies, however, intervened and sent instructions at once to Sir Hercules Robinson (now Lord Rossmead), the High Commissioner in South Africa, to the effect that the proposed relief force must be raised and commanded by an Imperial officer. Lieut.-General W. H. Goodenough, C.B., commanding the troops in South Africa, was immediately consulted, and selected me to command the corps, nominating at the same time for service with it Captain C. N. Watts, Derbyshire Regiment, D.A.A.G. Natal; Captain F. E. Kershaw, York and Lancaster Regiment; and Lieutenant Hon. J. G. Beresford, 7th Hussars. Lieutenant H. S. Turner, the Black Watch, who had been in the service of the B.S.A. Company for some time as magistrate at Umtali in Mashonaland, had just re-

turned to South Africa from leave of absence in England. He had been asked by Mr. Duncan to assist in raising the relief corps, and left Cape Town for Kimberley on 31st March for that purpose. He was at once appointed Adjutant and Paymaster to the corps, his connection with the B.S.A. Company, and his previous knowledge of the country and its residents, rendering his services of peculiar value.

Colonel Sir Richard Martin, K.C.M.G., the newly-appointed Deputy Commissioner and Commandant-General in Rhodesia, had started from England prior to the outbreak, and the instructions I received from the High Commissioner were, pending the arrival of that officer, to raise and equip at Mafeking a force of 500 mounted men with the object, first, of escorting arms, ammunition, and food supplies to Bulawayo ; and secondly, of operating against the insurgents in Matabeleland. I was informed that the whole of the expenses connected with the force would be defrayed by the British South Africa Company, and that Mr. Duncan, the Acting Administrator in Bulawayo, had been asked to give authority to Lieutenant Turner to sanction on behalf of the Company any expenses that he and I considered necessary, and this authority was at once given. I was directed to bear in mind that in all matters other than financial ones I was directly responsible

to the High Commissioner, and that I was to communicate direct with His Excellency on all points that might arise.

I was granted the local rank of Lieut.-Colonel, and Captains Watts and Kershaw that of Major, while employed on these special duties.

I received these instructions on the 2nd April, and arranged to leave Cape Town for Kimberley that evening, having put myself in communication with Mr. Stevens, the Secretary of the B.S.A. Company, at Cape Town, and made with him what few preliminary arrangements were possible as to the collection at Mafeking of the necessary arms, equipment, and stores.

CHAPTER II.

ORGANIZATION.

IT had been arranged that the 500 men, the number originally fixed for the corps, were to include some 220 officers and men of the B.S.A. Company's Police, who, after the raid into the Transvaal, had been sent to England, and were now returning in detachments to South Africa.

There were plenty of men anxious to join the new corps in Cape Town ; in fact, as soon as it became known that the force was to be raised, the offices of the B.S.A. Company were literally besieged by applicants desirous of enrolment. The Company, however, decided that all volunteers must enrol either at Kimberley or Mafeking, and recruiting, in the first instance, was limited to those places.

Major Kershaw and I left Cape Town on the evening of the 2nd April, having arranged that he should go on to Mafeking, commence enrolling there, and also take careful stock of what arms, equipment, and stores were available there ; while

I stayed at Kimberley to enlist recruits at that place. The first batch of the B.S.A. Company's Police—numbering, however, only 25 men—under Inspector Bowden and Sub-Inspectors Cashel and Wood, arrived at Cape Town on the 2nd April, and travelled on to Mafeking at once with Major Kershaw.

On our arrival at Kimberley, where Lieutenant Turner was awaiting us, we found that in consequence of the Easter holidays a great many influential people were away, notably Colonel Harris, with the Volunteer Brigade, who were having their annual encampment. He had, however, placed the magnificent drill-hall at our disposal, and had arranged for an office being reserved for us; and Mr. Gardner Williams and the Directors of De Beers Company, and other gentlemen, were all anxious to afford us every assistance in their power.

Notices were at once posted up and published in the local press to the effect that volunteers for service in Matabeleland would be enrolled, and during that day and the following (Easter Sunday) a few presented themselves. It was not, however, till after the return of the volunteers from their encampment, on the 7th, that any considerable number of desirable applicants came forward.

Every effort of course was made to secure young men, but of sufficient maturity and stamina to

withstand the hardships and privations that might have to be endured, and it was especially desirable that there should be in the ranks a sufficient proportion of men who had had some little military training and experience. Every recruit was questioned closely as to his riding and shooting capabilities, and very rarely was any man accepted who could not produce some testimonial or certificate of character; but notwithstanding all these precautions much had necessarily to be taken on trust. Amongst the applicants, however, there were a good many who had had previous service in the Bechuanaland Border Police, the Cape Mounted Rifles, or in one or other of the Volunteer Corps of Cape Colony or Natal, and a few old soldiers. Every candidate was examined by a doctor, and was certified by him to be physically fit for a campaign before he was finally approved.

The following rates of pay were fixed for non-commissioned officers and men, viz. :—

Staff-Sergeant . . .	11/-	per diem.
Troop Sergeant-Major . . .	10/-	„ „
Sergeant . . .	9/-	„ „
Corporal . . .	8/-	„ „
Trooper . . .	7/6	„ „

As regards the officers it was arranged that inspectors in the B.S.A. Company's Police should rank as captains in the corps, and sub-inspectors

as lieutenants, and that their pay should be:—

Captain	.	.	.	17/-	per diem.
Lieutenant	.	.	.	13/-	„ „

The Imperial officers serving with the corps received 15/- a day each, in addition to their regimental pay.

Men were enrolled for no definite period, but for such time as their services might be required in Matabeleland. The form of oath administered and signed by each man on enrolment is given in Appendix A.

By Part II. of the Colonial Forces Act of 1892, under which they took service, a commanding officer has power to—

(a) Award imprisonment, with or without hard labour, for any period not exceeding seven days.

(b) For the offence of drunkenness, order the offender to pay a fine not exceeding £1.

(c) In addition to or without any other punishment, order the offender to suffer any deduction from his ordinary pay to an amount not exceeding five days' pay.

(d) In the case of a non-commissioned officer, sentence the offender to be reduced to any lower grade or to the ranks.

(e) In the case of persons subject to this Act, not in receipt of ordinary military pay, to inflict a fine not exceeding £2.

Serious offences could be referred to ordinary or special courts of officers. Ordinary courts, which could be convened by any commanding officer, must consist of at least three members, and had the power of inflicting a fine of £15 and of awarding imprisonment, with or without hard labour, for any period not exceeding six months; they had no power to try offenders above the rank of non-commissioned officers.

Special courts, which could try officers, must be convened by the Governor, or by persons authorized by warrant to convene them; they could dismiss officers and others from the service; award imprisonment, with or without hard labour, for any period up to one year; and inflict a fine of £25.

Such were the powers placed in our hands for enforcing discipline. As a matter of fact, by the terms of the engagement any man was liable to discharge whose services were not required; and during the earlier days of the corps the punishment of dismissal was the one usually meted out to men who by their behaviour showed they were unlikely to be of service to us.

By Monday night, the 6th April, we had approved 65 recruits who had passed the doctor at Kimberley, and these were enrolled at 7 a.m. on the 7th and despatched at 9 a.m., under Lieutenant Cashel, by train to Mafeking, where they arrived

the following day. Major Kershaw had enrolled over 40 recruits on the 6th, and including the detachment of the B.S.A. Company's Police, under Captain Bowden, already referred to, there were at Mafeking on the night of the 8th April 4 officers and 141 men.

Simultaneously with the enrolment of recruits it was necessary to arrange at once for the purchase of horses. It was considered at first that some 700 or 800 would be required; but on the subsequent order for the increase of the corps considerably more than these became necessary, and eventually 1150 were bought.

Kimberley itself is a good centre for horses, and Mr. Lawrence, M.L.A., who was acting as agent for the B.S.A. Company there, immediately notified to the farmers that the Company would be in want of horses, and arranged with them to bring into Kimberley any they wished to dispose of.

Major Watts and Lieutenant Beresford arrived from Natal on the 6th, and the latter officer was at once deputed to purchase what horses he could in this district.

Messrs. Weil, the contractors at Mafeking, arranged to collect there any available horses in that neighbourhood that were for sale, and Major Kershaw was instructed to pass and purchase any suitable ones.

The Orange Free State is well known as a good

district for horses, and accordingly Mr. Fenwick, who had joined the corps as an officer at Kimberley, and who had had considerable experience in horses in all parts of the world, was sent there to purchase on behalf of the Company; and the majority of those he obtained were collected by Mr. Stockdale, a dealer at Ladybrand.

Mr. Holman, one of Messrs. Weil's agents, was sent to Colsburg, and subsequently to Middleburg and Steynburg—all good centres; and horses approved of by him were finally passed, before purchase, by Mr. Fenwick, who proceeded there from the Orange Free State.

The horses for the Johannesburg contingent were purchased there by Mr. Lawrey, and were sent to Mafeking with the men.

All horses were to be between 14.2 and 15.2 hands high, and between five and ten years old, and the price was to be from £15 to £20.

It may be well to state here the numbers purchased at the different centres. They were:—

Kimberley	.	.	.	.	543
Orange Free State	.	.	.	.	170
Colsburg	.	.	.	.	120
Middleburg	.	.	.	.	89
Steynburg	.	.	.	.	35
Mafeking and Vryburg	.	.	.	.	30
Johannesburg	.	.	.	.	163
Total	.	.	.	.	1150

The average cost of these horses was £17 13s.

This price did not of course include the cost of their conveyance to Mafeking from the place where they were bought ; but, considering that the first horse was not bought till the 8th April, and the last was delivered in Mafeking on the 25th April, and that consequently 1150 horses capable of carrying a man fully equipped, who would average between fifteen and sixteen stone, were bought in the short space of seventeen days, the price paid was extremely moderate.

Before we left Cape Town very little information could be obtained as to what stores and equipment the B.S.A. Company had at Mafeking, though it was known there were some which they had taken over from the Bechuanaland Border Police on the disbandment of that corps ; so as time was of vital importance, and it was essential that there should be no delay in the despatch of the force from the base, General Goodenough very kindly allowed us to take up with us 100 sets of mounted infantry equipment and clothing, and 100 saddles from the Government Stores.*

On Sunday, 5th April, Major Kershaw telegraphed the number of arms and the amount of stores there were at Mafeking. These were much less than we had anticipated, and I telegraphed immediately to the Imperial Secretary and to the

* These were of course all paid for by the B.S.A. Company.

Secretary of the B.S.A. Company at Cape Town what we should require to complete the equipment of the force.

We had had no hesitation in deciding that the corps should be armed with Martini-Henry rifles. There was, we knew, in addition to the stock at Mafeking, the property of the B.S.A. Company, a large Government reserve of these rifles at Cape Town; there was, as I had reason to know, plenty of ammunition for them both at Bulawayo and Mafeking; and any man enrolled who had had previous military experience would most certainly have been trained with and be accustomed to this rifle. All arms and equipment available in the ordnance stores were forwarded to Mafeking with the utmost promptitude, and a list of the articles supplied by the Government will be found in Appendix B. We all of us owe a deep debt of gratitude to General Goodenough; Colonel Crofton, the Chief Staff Officer; Major Jeans and Captain Perry, Ordnance Store Officers, for the exertions they made to forward everything that was required for the column as soon as it was asked for, and we are all fully sensible to what extent the rapid organization of the corps was due to their efforts. Mr. Stevens, the Secretary of the B.S.A. Company, gave orders to local firms for all articles which could not be supplied from the Government Stores, and Messrs. Weil had a

large stock of clothing in their stores at Mafeking which was utilized. Colonel Harris very kindly allowed us to take 100 saddles belonging to the Diamond Field Horse, and in short, everyone to whom application was made did their utmost to ensure there being no unnecessary delay in the despatch of the force when once the men, horses, and transport had been secured.

A day or two after we had commenced the enrolment of recruits instructions were received from the High Commissioner, to the effect that the strength of the corps was to be 750, instead of 500 as previously arranged. From the very outset offers had been received from various people in Johannesburg to raise and send a contingent of any strength that might be required. None of these offers were accepted at first, but on the receipt of the order for the increased establishment it was considered advisable to ask for 150 men from there, and the task of raising this number, with a due proportion of officers, was entrusted to Mr. Lawley. He had any amount of applicants, and his only difficulty lay in the selection of those most likely to prove themselves efficient.

By the evening of the 8th of April 118 horses had been purchased, and we arranged to entrain them at once and have their trucks attached to the ordinary train leaving Kimberley for Mafeking that evening. Major Watts, Lieutenant Villiers,

(who had joined as a volunteer and acted as orderly officer to me), and I, travelled by the same train, leaving Lieutenants Turner and Beresford at Kimberley, the former to continue the enrolment of recruits, and the latter the purchase of horses. On our arrival at Mafeking on the afternoon of the 9th we found excellent progress had been made with the arrangements for the camp—45 tents from the stores had been pitched, field kitchens, etc., constructed, and a small canteen established. All the men in camp had undergone riding drill and musketry practice on the rifle range, and Major Kershaw had selected for the first two detachments those who possessed the best riding and shooting qualifications, so that matters were fairly under weigh.

Major Watts was appointed Commandant at the base, and undertook the arduous work of clothing and equipping the different detachments. A list of articles supplied to each man will be found in Appendix C. He was assisted by Mr. Lovell, a gentleman who had volunteered for the duty at Kimberley, but who, though he worked zealously and well, had not the experience necessary for such an undertaking; and on our representing to General Goodenough the difficulties we were having without a trained official in this branch he, with the permission of Lieutenant-Colonel Vulliamy, commanding 1st

Battalion Leicestershire Regiment, sent up the Quartermaster of that battalion, Lieutenant Baker, who took over the post of Quartermaster and remained at Mafeking till all the clothing, equipment, and stores had been issued. Major Watts and I both feel how much we owe to Lieutenant Baker for his services, and to Lieutenant-Colonel Vulliamy for allowing us the benefit of them.

Lieutenant Beresford took charge of the horse lines as soon as he arrived from Kimberley, selected the horses for the individual men of each detachment, and superintended the saddle-fitting and branding and shoeing arrangements.

Our supplies of stores, etc., from the south had been coming in regularly, but Messrs. Weil had not secured anything like the number of mules and wagons we wanted. A large number had been bought in the Colsburg district of Cape Colony, but were being delayed in their despatch to Mafeking owing to the want of trucks. The railway authorities one and all worked hard to supply our numerous wants, but they laboured under the difficulty of there being only a single line of rail between Kimberley and Mafeking, and owing to the Easter holiday traffic and a big agricultural show that was being held at Port Elizabeth much of the rolling stock had been diverted from the large centres. Fearing that the non-arrival of transport might seriously delay

the progress of the column, I telegraphed to the High Commissioner, asking that precedence might be given on the line to any trucks containing animals or wagons for us. This was granted, and with this authority the railway officials were able to forward all our trucks from the south as soon as loaded.

In referring to the assistance we received in our organization of the corps I must not omit to mention that of Mr. F. Newton, C.M.G., the Resident Commissioner of Bechuanaland, and the officers of the Bechuanaland Border Police, who placed all their available huts and barracks at our disposal, and did all in their power to help us.

Three more Imperial officers were appointed to the corps, viz., Lieutenant K. Fraser, 7th Hussars, who was detailed to assist Captain Beresford; Lieutenant Wheeler, R.A., who was to have charge of the Maxim guns it was proposed to take with the column; and Lieutenant Dent, 1st Battalion Leicestershire Regiment, who was appointed signalling officer. Steps were taken to select at once from the men enrolled those who had had any previous experience with machine-guns or in army signalling.

Lieutenant Pyke, who had served with the B.S.A. Company's Forces in the campaign of 1893, and had lost an arm in one of the engagements, joined the corps; he had had charge of

machine-guns before, and he was posted to the Maxim detachment as an assistant to Captain Wheeler.

We had been already making inquiries as to how we could obtain some Maxim guns for the column, and Mr. Duncan was most anxious that we should bring up a good number with us. Eventually the High Commissioner arranged for the purchase of two from the Naval Store at Simon's Town, and these were sent up at once; they were mounted on travelling naval carriages with shafts, to be drawn by one horse, the carriage weighing about 4 cwt., the wheels having a track of 46 inches and a diameter of 48 inches. With only the small Colonial horses which we were able to procure one horse was quite unable to draw these continuously, and Captain Wheeler improvised harness for a leader, the latter being hooked in whenever the road was at all heavy. The carriages were useful on the road and over fairly even ground, but they could never be taken over rough and hilly country without capsizing, and were not altogether suitable for the work we had to do.

A Mr. Warren from Durban then offered the Company ten new Maxims he had on tripod mountings; and these, after some negotiations as to price, the Company purchased, together with a certain amount of ammunition, for £4500, a

price considerably in excess of their value; but there was practically no alternative if the guns were to be obtained in sufficient time to be of any use. Three were sent up by sea to Beira for service in Mashonaland, and the remaining seven were attached to our column. They had all at first to be moved about on wagons, but later Lieutenant Wheeler made an arrangement by which they could be carried on mules, and they could then be taken anywhere. All these guns were .450 bore. A good many men were found who had some knowledge of the working of Maxim guns, and no very great difficulty was experienced in getting together a detachment for them; but we found very few signallers, and though we had a complete set of signalling equipment from the Ordnance Stores at Cape Town, it was some time before Lieutenant Dent could get together any number of men sufficiently trained.

We had secured as medical officers to the corps Doctors Michell and Morris. The former served throughout all the operations, and did excellent work; the latter only remained a short time after our arrival in Matabeleland. Dr. Michell was appointed senior medical officer, and brought with him five or six men with some medical knowledge, who acted as hospital orderlies, and others were appointed from the corps after our concentration.

During the next two or three days recruits were coming in freely, and it was soon evident that with the Johannesburg contingent we should have no difficulty in obtaining the numbers we required; in fact, there were many desirable men who came up late for whom we had no vacancies, though, in view of the considerable "waste" the long march would probably entail, a good many were enrolled in excess of the authorized establishment.

A few men possessing special qualifications were enrolled by the B.S.A. Company at Cape Town, and a small but very useful detachment, recruited by Major Nesbitt of Grahamstown, was taken from the Eastern Province; but with these exceptions, and the Johannesburg contingent, all men made their own way to Kimberley or Mafeking for enrolment.

Altogether more than 1000 were on the rolls at various times, but of these only some 850 can be really said to have served in the campaign, and the following particulars as to the nationality, previous occupation, etc., of these men will perhaps be found interesting :—

NATIONALITY.

English born, who had arrived in the	
Colony within three years (about)	300
English born, who had been resident in	
the Colony over three years (about)	290

AN IRREGULAR CORPS

Afrikaners.	English	.	(about)	150
„	Dutch	.	(about)	50
Australians	.	.	.	22
Canadians	.	.	.	5
Americans	.	.	.	5
Germans	.	.	.	4
Spanish	.	.	.	2
Others	.	.	.	17

Statistics as to their previous occupations are more difficult to compile, so many having tried more than one kind of employment ; but they may be roughly classified as under :—

Miners and Engineers	.	.	.	100
In employment of De Beers Co.	.	.	.	50
Farmers	.	.	.	120
Clerks	.	.	.	100
Old Soldiers	.	.	.	50
From Colonial Corps	.	.	.	30

The remaining 400 had served before either in the Bechuanaland Border Police or the B.S.A. Company's Police, as in addition to those of the latter who came out from England many men gradually joined us who had not gone home after the incursion into the Transvaal, and others were picked up on the road or arrived later in Rhodesia.

There was considerable variety in the ages of the men, a good many exceeding forty, while a few were quite young. The average age was

probably between twenty-five and twenty-seven years.

With the various detachments of the B.S.A. Company's Police the following officers joined the corps :—

Chief-Inspector	Bodle.
Inspector	Straker.
„	Drury.
„	Bowden.
Sub-Inspector	Constable.
„	„ Tomlinson.
„	„ Williams.
„	„ Murray.
„	„ Cazalet.
„	„ McQueen.
„	„ Cashel.
„	„ Wood.

And Sergeants-Major Abbott and Macgeean were promoted to the rank of lieutenant.

The officers with the Johannesburg contingent were :—

Captain	Fowler.
„	Murray.
Lieutenant	McNicol.
„	Forbes.
„	Rawstone.
„	Mathias.

Other volunteer officers who joined at Kimberley being :—

Captain Satchwell.

Lieutenant Oatley.

„ May.

„ Masterson.

These being supplemented at Mafeking by :—

Lieutenant Heyman.

„ Lees.

„ Fordham.

„ Michell.

The selection of non-commissioned officers was necessarily a difficulty, so little being known of any of the men who had joined. There was, however, a fair proportion among the B.S.A. Company's Police, and the balance were appointed from men who from their testimonials and previous careers seemed best fitted for the position. One senior non-commissioned officer with the rank of troop sergeant-major, two other sergeants, and three corporals were appointed for each fifty men.

After careful consideration I had come to the conclusion that the best means of getting the corps up to Bulawayo as rapidly as possible, and at the same time of ensuring that they were an efficient body of men on arrival, was to start them off from the base at Mafeking in small detach-

ments, following each other daily, and concentrating to whatever extent the movements and dispositions of the enemy might render necessary, either at Macloutsi or Mangwe; and I fixed the number of non-commissioned officers and men for each detachment at fifty.

The corps was composed of men who were being hurriedly collected together from various parts of the Colony, many of whom had had no knowledge of military life or discipline, who were unknown to the officers and non-commissioned officers who were to be placed in authority over them, and to each other; while a large proportion of the officers themselves, though all were as anxious and willing as possible, had had very little previous military experience of any kind, certainly none of handling troops in the field. It would, I considered, have been utterly unreasonable to expect such material to form itself or to be formed at once into an efficient fighting unit, more especially as the first duty which would devolve upon it would be such a difficult and arduous undertaking as the long march from Mafeking to Bulawayo. On the other hand, in each small detachment the officers had a fair chance of becoming acquainted with their men, and of selecting those likely to become non-commissioned officers, and they were not handicapped at starting by the responsibilities of a

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command beyond their powers, while the men in their turn had far more opportunities of acquiring a knowledge of their duties and of settling down gradually into this new mode of life, the daily routine with a small party being more elastic and less irksome to novices than that of a large force ; and finally, I should be able to judge, from the state of efficiency in which I found each detachment at the end of the march, what were the capabilities of the officers and non-commissioned officers with it.

Then as regards the march itself. The water supply along the road was, as we all know, far from plentiful, and there was far less chance of its failure altogether at any particular point if it was drawn on for small numbers day by day than if parties of 200 or 300 men, with a correspondingly large number of animals, came together.

Further, it was foreseen that there must necessarily be many difficulties with the transport wagons, most of the mules having been just bought, and the conductors and drivers only recently engaged. It was hoped that with a succession of small parties, each accompanied by only two or three wagons, any breakdown in the transport of any particular detachment could be repaired with the co-operation and assistance of the succeeding one when they overtook them, and that even under the most adverse circum-

stances the failure of any one party would not entail the interruption of the steady and continuous flow of reinforcements for Bulawayo, which it was of vital importance to keep up.

I am fully convinced that the fact that so few *contretemps* and delays were experienced on the road, and that immediately on arrival in Matabeleland the corps was fit for active operations in the field, was due in no small measure to the march having been carried out by small detachments.

CHAPTER III.

THE ROUTE. TRANSPORT AND SUPPLIES. PREPARATIONS FOR THE MARCH.

ONE of the first questions which had to be decided was, naturally, the route which the column should take on its march from Mafeking to Bulawayo, the main alternatives being the coach road, *vid* Palla, Palapye, and Tati, to Mangwe ; or from Palla, *vid* Selika and Macloutsi, to Mangwe.

The former was considerably the shorter, the distance from Palla to Mangwe, *vid* Palapye, being about 260 miles, as against 310 by the other route; and another advantage it had lay in the fact that there was a considerable amount of grain and supplies at Palapye, which could be spread along the route without much difficulty, and from which wagons could be replenished. On the other hand, there were long stretches of heavy sand where there was little or no water, and with such a large number of animals as would accompany the column any breakdown at these points might

have very serious consequences. However, we determined not to come to a final decision on this point until we had received the fullest possible information from people who were well acquainted with both roads, and who had traversed them recently, and we accordingly telegraphed to Mr. Duncan at Bulawayo asking him to obtain from the most reliable authorities their opinions as to the best route to be taken by the column; we addressed the same question to Mr. Ashburnham, the magistrate at Palapye, and Captain Walford, who commanded the Bechuanaland Border Police, and who was at Macloutsi; and we also interrogated all the transport riders who had been lately on the road. The answers we received were all to the effect that owing to the scarcity of water it would be extremely hazardous to attempt the Tati route, and though the extra fifty miles seemed an irritating addition to the long march, we felt there was no alternative but to adopt the longer route, *vid* Macloutsi, and decided accordingly.

Captain Greener, the Paymaster of the Bechuanaland Border Police at Mafeking, had traversed the various routes north of Mafeking several times, and had made notes on the roads. At my suggestion he prepared from these an itinerary of the road, *vid* Palla and Macloutsi, to Mangwe; and we had copies of this printed and given, together with a rough sketch-map of

the route, to each officer. The notes which I append with the attached sketch are taken from this.

From Mafeking to Pitsani Pothlugo (about $1\frac{1}{2}$ miles from the spot where the troops, under Dr. Jameson, had their camp previous to their march into the Transvaal) there is a good hard road in the dry season all the way through open bush country. At Pitsani there is water in a well at the store and in dams. From there the road crosses the Korwe Flats, commencing about six miles from Pitsani, and extending for nearly nine miles; they are hard in the dry season, but very soft and heavy after rains. At Sandpits, the second halting-place, there is a store and water in a well.

From Sandpits is a fairly good road to Aasvogel Kop (passing still through open bush veldt), where there is a vley where water generally may be found, with a store and well. From there it is only fifteen miles to Ramoutsa, a big native town, the capital of the Chief Ikaning, close to the Notwani River, which forms at this point the Transvaal border; and thence to Gaberones, a distance of eighteen miles, the road is sandy and the bush becomes thicker. Gaberones was a quarter for a large detachment of Bechuanaland Border Police, and some of the new Basuto Police raised for service in the Protectorate are now

stationed there. There are huts for troops, and stables and a telegraph office. Mochudi, the head town of the Chief Linchwe, is eighteen miles further on, also on the Notwani River, and there is a fairly good road. Thus far no great difficulties were to be expected either from the road or water supply, but between Mochudi and Palla, a distance of eighty-five miles, there is heavy sand nearly all the way. There are no stores, and though the road runs down the left bank of the Notwani, and water can be obtained anywhere during the rains, in dry weather it has to be looked for in pools, sometimes miles apart, or obtained from holes dug in the river bed.

Palla is close to the junction of the Notwani River with the Limpopo or Crocodile. It is a favourite halting-place for transport riders and convoys. There are two stores there and a telegraph office.

From Palla the road continues down the left bank of the Limpopo River for a distance of fourteen miles to Saas' Post. There are stretches of heavy sand and dense bush. The coach road is followed for six miles further, when it branches off to the north-west, the Macloutsi road continuing along the Limpopo, and running through a fairly open country with trees, but little undergrowth, to the Makalopsi, a sand river running into the Limpopo, which is crossed thirty-four miles from

Palla. From there on to Macloutsie, a total distance of 196 miles, the road has much the same character. The Lotsani, Suke, Moquachi, Pakwe, and Marapong are all sand rivers running into the Limpopo, with water running during the rains, but in the dry season only to be found in pools, when it is slightly brackish, and should be boiled.

The all-important question of transport had to be taken in hand at once, and it was then that the effect of the rinderpest on the situation became so startlingly apparent.

The disease had practically swept all the cattle out of Matabeleland and Khama's country through which the column must pass, and was spreading rapidly through Bechuanaland, and even if it had been possible to procure transport oxen, it would have been madness to attempt a march with them through the tainted districts; consequently mules became the only transport animals possible for the undertaking.

Now the enormous difference caused by the substitution of mules for oxen to draw the transport wagons in the long march of nearly 600 miles which lay before us may not at first sight be apparent, and it may be as well to explain exactly what that difference meant. In the first place the maximum weight that it is considered may be put on a wagon drawn by oxen is about 8000 lbs.,

while one drawn by mules cannot be loaded with more than about 5500 lbs. As a matter of fact, on a long journey these weights would not be attempted in either case, but whatever amount of reduction circumstances might render necessary or desirable, the proportion would remain the same. But by far the most important point is, that whereas oxen, if carefully driven, and travelling is done at night (as is usually the case in South Africa), can practically subsist on the grass they can pick up on the veldt by the roadside during the day, it is quite out of the question to expect mules to perform heavy or continuous work unless they are supplied with a certain daily modicum of grain. Now the least that could be estimated for each mule daily would be about 5 lbs., and with spans of twelve mules 60 lbs. would have to be carried on each wagon for every day's journey. For a journey such as that from Mafeking to Bulawayo about 4500 lbs. was the utmost that could be loaded on a wagon, and if the march was estimated to occupy thirty days, more than two-fifths of the carrying power of each wagon would be taken up by food for the animals drawing it, unless supplies could be provided on the road. This illustrates the difference involved by being unable to use oxen; but with us in any case there were 1100 horses to be fed on the march, and all these animals had not only to cover the distance

to Bulawayo as speedily as possible, but it was also essential that they should arrive there in such condition as to be fit at once for active operations in the field. It was obvious that grain for them could not be carried up with the detachments as they marched without an amount of transport which would involve culpable delay, and the first thing to do was to arrange for supplies of grain being laid down at once along the route.

Messrs. Weil, who had been entrusted by the British South Africa Company with all the transport and supply arrangements, had fortunately a certain amount already at different points along the road in connection with their ordinary business as forwarding agents of goods from Mafeking to Matabeleland—not, of course, in anything like the amount that we should require for our column, but sufficient for a start.

There was a large stock of grain at Mafeking, and more could readily be brought up there from the south by train, so orders were issued by Mr. Julius Weil at once to keep on “strengthening” all the grain stations that already existed, and to supplement them with others to meet the requirements of our daily marches.

The stations at which there were considerable quantities of grain were Ramoutsa, Gaberones, Mochudi, and Palla—distant from Mafeking 85, 103, 131, and 215 miles respectively.

The following grain stations were decided on as far as Macloutsi, north of which point it was not considered safe to attempt to lay down supplies :—

Place.	Intermediate Distance.
1. Pitsani Pothlugo . . .	26 miles.
2. Sandpits . . .	19 „
3. Aasvogel Kop . . .	25 „
4. Ramoutsa . . .	15 „
5. Gaberones . . .	18 „
6. Mochudi . . .	28 „
7. Kalakani . . .	18 „
8. Suswan . . .	18 „
9. Lokala . . .	24 „
10. Palla . . .	24 „
11. Wegdraai . . .	55 „
12. Selika . . .	53 „
13. Lotsani . . .	30 „
14. Moquachi . . .	26 „
15. Marapong . . .	22 „
16. Macloutsi . . .	9 „

The amount of grain laid down at each of these posts by Messrs. Weil is given in Appendix D; but it must be borne in mind that this was being done gradually, and the difficulty was to ensure the supplies being at the different stations in time to keep pace with the progress of the various detachments.

The stations were necessarily fixed according to the facilities for obtaining water—the main consideration in South Africa—and, as will be seen

the distance to be travelled daily varied from 15 to 30 miles. At two points on the road from Palla to Macloutsi the distances between "grain" stations exceeded 50 miles. This was unavoidable, owing to the impossibility of transferring the supplies from Palapye to more points in the time available; but this difficulty could be overcome, as when the detachments had travelled as far as this, the wagons would have been so far lightened by the consumption of rations by the troops that they would be able to carry on sufficient grain for the intermediate halts that would be necessary between Palla and the Wegdraai, and between the latter place and Selika.

The adoption of the Macloutsi route involved the transfer of the grain at Palapye across the veldt to various points along the Palla-Macloutsi route between those two stations, not a very arduous undertaking if the ordinary supply of ox transport had been available, but presenting great difficulties at the present juncture. No mules were available for this purpose in or near Palapye, and it was impossible to spare any from the transport train at Mafeking; even if they could have been spared they could not have reached Palapye in sufficient time. There were, fortunately, a few oxen still left in Khama's country, and with these the transfer was gradually made. It was certain that the poor beasts would sooner or later succumb to the fell

disease, as in fact they all did ; but we trusted that before they were attacked by it they might be able to accomplish the important task set them. On more than one occasion the whole of a team died, and the transport riders had to return to Palapye for a fresh span ; but the detachments were never actually delayed by the want of supplies, though the horses and mules of some of the later ones had, between certain points, to subsist on half rations.

The distances from Palapye to the different posts varied from 50 to 80 miles, with no roads and very little water, so that under all the circumstances it was a great achievement on the part of Messrs. Weil and the transport riders and agents who worked under them.

We calculated that we should want at least forty wagons and 500 mules, and Messrs. Weil were authorized to provide a transport to that extent, they having a transport train of their own to start with, and from the nature of their business being in a position to secure more rapidly than anyone else what they required to supplement it. They had, too, at their depôt in Mafeking sufficient supplies to last a force of 1000 men for thirty days, and orders were given for these to be arranged in readiness for detachments of fifty men, according to the daily scale of rations authorized by the B.S.A. Company. This is given in Appendix E.

Thirty days' rations were carried for every man, with the exception of those belonging to the first two detachments, who only took fifteen days' supplies from Mafeking and filled up the other fifteen from Messrs. Weil's store at Palla.

We knew that there were over 400,000 rounds of ammunition for Martini-Henry rifles in Bulawayo; and as the majority of the Bulawayo Field Force would be armed with Lee-Metfords, very little of this could have been expended before our arrival. Consequently there could be no necessity for taking with us any large quantities of ammunition, and we fixed the amount at 250 rounds per rifle, with an additional fifty rounds as a regimental reserve.

The kits to be carried on the wagons were limited to 20 lbs. each, including two blankets and one waterproof sheet with which each man was provided. All spare clothing belonging to the men was left in store at Mafeking.

On each wagon was carried a buck sail or tarpaulin, weighing 115 lbs.; these could be stretched between two wagons when the latter were halted, and thus formed a shelter for the men in the case of wet weather. A small consignment of drugs and hospital stores was sent with each party, as well as the necessary cooking utensils, tools for repairing wagons, picks, shovels, etc.

We found that two wagons would be sufficient

for the requirements of fifty men if a third wagon containing the reserve ammunition, additional stores, and sundries were provided for every third or fourth party. In Appendix F will be found the actual number of wagons taken and the details of the stores, etc., loaded on each.

The season for "horse-sickness"—that mysterious South African disease which so often decimates the stock of the country—was by no means over; and as we had to pass through districts where it was usually prevalent, notably Palla, Macloutsi, and Mangwe, it was feared that the numbers of our animals would be terribly reduced by the time we reached the end of our journey. We arranged to take sixty horses for every party of fifty men and two spare mules for every wagon. We were exceptionally fortunate no doubt, for with this percentage of spare animals we were able to pull through.

So much depended on everything in the shape of supplies and water on the road being sufficient for the requirements of the column, that Major Kershaw was directed to leave Mafeking on Sunday, the 12th April, and proceed along the road in advance. His instructions were to take three non-commissioned officers and go by coach to Gaberones and Palla, purchase a couple of horses there, and ride on to Macloutsi. He was to inspect all the halting-places along the line of

march, and report on the route, more especially as regards the water supply and the forage. A non-commissioned officer was to be left each at Gaberones and Palla, and one taken on with him to Macloutsis. These non-commissioned officers were to take charge of all forage and provisions in the stores, to keep careful check of all issues, and to send in reports daily to the officer commanding at Mafeking, stating the amount of provisions they had in their store and what parties had arrived and left. They were also to collect information from all persons coming along the road from the north, and telegraph anything of importance to Mafeking. There were telegraph stations at Gaberones, Mochudi, Palla, and Macloutsis.

Detailed instructions were issued to officers commanding detachments regarding the march. Much was left to their discretion; but they were enjoined to march as much as possible in the evenings and early mornings, and halt during the heat of the day. A day's halt was ordered each at Gaberones and Palla, not only to rest men and horses, but also to enable one detachment to come up with another, when progress might be discussed and repairs or deficiencies made good. Great stress was laid on the importance of each detachment rendering every assistance it could to another and of working unselfishly for the progress of the corps, and also on the necessity for the

utmost care being exercised in the issue of forage from the different stations. A carefully-selected man was to be left at each to see that there was no waste. Every opportunity was to be taken of imparting instruction to the men on the road, and reports were to be sent back as frequently as possible, so that later detachments might benefit by the experience of the earlier ones.

No cash payments were made to the men at Mafeking or on the march up, but coupons were issued which were available at the small canteen we had established in camp, and also at the different stores on the road. Captain Turner, who acted as paymaster as well as adjutant, arranged with the Secretary of the B.S.A. Company that any men desirous of remitting portions of their pay to their relatives during their absence could do so, and many availed themselves of this arrangement.

The first detachment left early on Sunday morning, the 12th April, and very glad indeed we all were to think a start had really been made. They did not present a very imposing appearance as they marched off—men, horses, saddles, and equipment, all being new to each other. They went off in good spirits, however, and we felt hopeful that with the large majority keen to learn and do their best they would take a creditable part in the work before them.

Major Kershaw left by coach at the same time,

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and it was with no little anxiety that I awaited his reports on the road and the amount of supplies laid down, as, though Messrs. Weil were sanguine that there would be no hitch in their arrangements and were satisfied with the progress already made, I was very desirous of hearing the opinion of an officer who I knew realized what the requirements of a column such as ours would be.

Earl Grey, the new Administrator of Rhodesia, arrived at Mafeking that morning, and with him Mr. C. W. Benson, who acted as Secretary to him, and afterwards took a leading part in the negotiations with Khama and other chiefs as to the new railway line to Bulawayo, Mr. Kennedy, master of the High Court at Salisbury, Captain Hon. C. White, and Mr. Harold Lowther, who afterwards joined our corps and did excellent service with the scouts. Lord Grey had left England when all was peaceful in Matabeleland, and it was only on arrival at Cape Town that he heard the startling news of the rising. He threw himself at once with the utmost energy into all the arrangements of the relief force, and it was of the greatest possible benefit to us to have on the spot with us one who could, and did, authorize the expenditure for anything we considered necessary.

Mr. Duncan had been telegraphing to us daily from Bulawayo, and we had heard of the engagement in which the Hon. M. Gifford, C.M.G., had

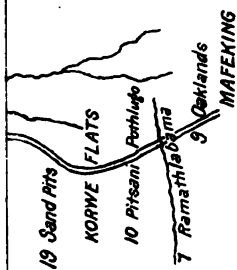
been wounded after a most determined and gallant stand made by the small force under his command, and also of the serious losses in men and horses sustained by the patrol under Captain Brand in the Gwanda district. Altogether, although no attack had been made on the town or anything like an attempt at it, matters seemed very serious at Bulawayo. We had not, however, been able to ascertain, so far, what the state of affairs was as regards their food supplies, and Lord Grey at once realized how important it was that this should be made clear. We were pushing up reinforcements as fast as we possibly could, but we were only taking with us food for our men and animals sufficient for the march up, and if there was, or was likely to be, any scarcity of supplies at Bulawayo, we should only be adding to the embarrassments of the defenders of the country if we brought into it a number of troops without at the same time taking a proportionate addition to their food-stuffs; and, therefore, before proceeding further with our arrangements for the despatch of the relief column, it was imperative to ascertain beyond doubt whether men or supplies were the more immediately and urgently wanted.

Mr. Duncan, though fully impressed with the vital importance of the food question, had not considered that he was justified in putting any

embargo on supplies, or in issuing any edict prohibiting their sale to private individuals; nor could he obtain any actual statistics as to the amount of meat and grain in the possession of merchants in the town. He, however, ascertained that there was no immediate danger of supplies running short for the population of Bulawayo, and that even with the addition of the relief column there was sufficient to last for some little time; while, on the other hand, he urged that no offensive movements far from Bulawayo could be attempted until reinforcements arrived, and that their rapid despatch was anxiously looked for. Consequently, all the arrangements so far made stood good.

Lord Grey was very anxious to raise a native contingent to assist in the suppression of the rebellion, and he commissioned Captain Jesser Coope, who was in the B.S.A. Company's service—having entered Mashonaland with the Pioneer Expedition of 1890—to proceed to Tati and raise a force there from among Khama's men, who were believed to be eager to have a chance of fighting the Matabele. Fifty horses out of those we had purchased were driven up to Tati by a small party of ten men, under the superintendence of Lieutenants Nicholls and Fenwick, the latter having arrived at Mafeking on the completion of his duties connected with the purchase of horses.

Major Robertson, an officer who had served as



Scale.



Adjutant of the 1st Royal Dragoons, and subsequently in the 6th (Inniskilling) Dragoons, was also deputed to enrol some 200 natives from Johannesburg, known as "Cape Boys," the name originally given to the half-breeds of Cape Colony, but applied afterwards to almost any natives residing in that Colony or the Transvaal. The men raised by Major Robertson were mostly employed in connection with the various mines, and received 4s. a day pay. Major Robertson was allowed to select three officers to assist him.

Our own corps was further increased by the addition of a dismounted detachment of thirty-two men, formed of a number of men who had walked all the way from Johannesburg to Mafeking (120 miles) to join the force. When they arrived we had already completed our numbers, but in consideration of the distance they had already come Lord Grey undertook to enrol them as an extra detachment if they agreed to perform the march to Bulawayo on foot, which they did. The command of them was given to Lieutenant Hurrell, a Militia officer, who had just come out from England, and he was assisted by Mr. Lovell, who had vacated the post of quartermaster on being relieved by Lieutenant Baker.

There were no mules available for this detachment, so they were provided with two wagons drawn by eighteen donkeys each.

CHAPTER IV.

THE MARCH TO BULAWAYO.

THE first detachment, as has been stated, started on the 12th April. Unfortunately, owing to the non-arrival of the necessary transport, the second detachment could not leave on the 13th as had been arranged, but it left on the 14th, and the others as follows :—

3rd detachment	.	.	.	15th April.
4th	„	.	.	16th „
5th	„	.	.	17th „
6th	„	.	.	18th „
7th	„	(and 2 Maxims)	.	19th „
8th and 9th detachments	„	.	.	20th „
Signallers and Medical detachment			.	21st „
10th detachment	.	.	.	23rd „
Maxim	„	(7 Maxims)	.	24th „
11th	„	(dismounted)	.	25th „
12th	„	.	.	28th „
13th	„	.	.	29th „
14th	„	.	.	1st May.

The seven Maxim guns from Durban did not reach Mafeking in time for them to be despatched

northward as early as we could have wished ; so we sent off on the 19th the two naval guns, with a small detachment under Lieutenant Pyke, and these were the only machine-guns we had up in time for our first engagements on the 25th May. Major Kershaw sent a fairly satisfactory report of the water and supplies along the road as far as Mochudi (130 miles from Mafeking), where he arrived on the 14th ; but at this place the River Notwani was dry, and although there was a stretch of water 200 yards long by 150 yards broad and five feet deep, formed by a dam the Chief Linchwe had constructed, this had almost certainly been fouled by cattle stricken with rinderpest, many carcases being found near the river. Linchwe himself was most anxious to render any assistance he could, and by digging in the bed of the river water was struck at the depth of a foot or two ; a few boxes and barrels were then sunk in the holes, and in twenty-four hours they were full of clear water.

A most discouraging account was, however, given of the section of road between Mochudi and Palla, and it was evidently here that the detachment would experience most difficulties. The road itself was very heavy and sandy, carcases of animals were lying about everywhere, and the stench from them was indescribable, while the water in the river bed was only to be found

in pools at long intervals, which it was only too probable had been polluted by the stricken animals. Moreover, no grain had been laid down at any of the intermediate stations except at Suswan, where there was one stranded wagon containing 3000 lbs. of oat hay.

Messrs. Weil's agents at Mochudi and Ramoutsa were doing their utmost to collect grain from these districts; and on the other side of the Notwani River, near the latter place, there were several stranded wagons with grain, which had been on their way from the Transvaal when the oxen sickened and died—this grain could not be brought across owing to want of transport. At Mochudi, however, a fair amount of grain was procurable, and this was being pushed up along the road to Palla; but it was only by the most strenuous efforts that it could be got up in time for the different detachments.

Owing to the scarcity of water between Mochudi and Palla, Major Kershaw recommended the adoption of the Marico-Sequani route to the latter place from Gaberones. It was undoubtedly the best, and was the one subsequently taken by the Imperial troops which came up; but Messrs. Weil's resources in the way of transport were at this time taxed to their uttermost, and they could not have effected the transfer of supplies, which the change of route would have rendered

necessary, without causing considerable delay to the progress of the column. Information was at once given to all commanders of detachments of the difficulties that would be met on this section of the road, and they were directed to push on over it as rapidly as the state of their transport would permit, and strict injunctions were given that all water was to be boiled before being drunk by the men.

Although we had been arranging in the first instance for the supply of the column only as far as Macloutsi, there was a distance of 175 miles to be traversed beyond that before Bulawayo was reached, for which we should have to carry our supplies on our wagons; and it was consequently necessary that considerable stores should be collected at Macloutsi, and if possible also at Mangwe. Messrs. Weil were expecting large consignments of grain from the Transvaal, which were being forwarded from Pietersburg to Macloutsi, and from Johannesburg to Palla; and they were afraid that as the Transvaal Government had a cordon of police along the border to prevent the incursion of cattle from tainted districts, there might be some delay in the forwarding of these wagons. On this being represented to the High Commissioner he telegraphed to the Transvaal Government asking that nothing should be done

to delay these wagons, and they duly arrived without hindrance.

Lord Grey left Mafeking by the coach on the 19th April, taking with him Captain White, Captain Straker, and Mr. Benson, and leaving Mr. Kennedy to act as agent for the Company with regard to all the further requirements of our column. Before starting he had arranged with the High Commissioner for the despatch to Mafeking of a detachment of the 7th Hussars from Natal and of 200 Mounted Infantry, who would be available for service in Matabeleland should further reinforcements become necessary, as well as for two 2·5-inch guns belonging to No. 10 Mountain Battery Royal Artillery, Natal, to be sent up with mules, harness, and ammunition complete; and a certain number of non-commissioned officers and men to form the nucleus of gun detachments, which could be completed by the enrolment of volunteers from our force or from Bulawayo.

Lord Grey arrived at Palla on the 23rd April, having just before reaching that place overtaken the first detachment under Captain Bowden, which reached there the same day. This detachment had halted for twenty - four hours at Ramoutsa, as well as at Gaberones, in order to enable the second detachment, which had not left Mafeking till the 14th, to come within its regu-

lated interval of it ; and so far the progress had been most satisfactory, no hitch having occurred, and men, horses, and mules all arriving fit and well. The second detachment reached Palla on the 24th, all the animals being well, so much so that permission was given to both detachments to do without the halt of twenty-four hours there, previously ordered, and to proceed at once to Macloutsi. Great credit is due to Captain Bowden, Lieutenants Wood and Cashel, for the care they took of all their animals on the march.

Major Kershaw had been delayed at Palla by his inability to procure suitable horses for his journey to Macloutsi. However, on the 23rd he managed to buy two ponies that were "salted" (*i.e.*, which had recovered from the horse-sickness and therefore not liable to it), though he had to pay as much as £75 and £80 for them respectively, and he started off on the 24th, Captain Beresford journeying up by coach from Mafeking to take his place at Palla.

The reports that were received daily showed that all the detachments on the road were making satisfactory progress, each keeping its prescribed interval. By the 25th there were over 700 men on the road, and on the 26th I started by coach for Palapye, whence I meant to travel by post cart to Macloutsi, where I hoped to arrive about the same time as the first detachment.

Captain Turner and Lieutenant Villiers accompanied me, Major Watts being left behind to complete the arrangements for the despatch of the detachments still remaining, assisted by Captain Fraser. When the last detachment had left they were to proceed by coach, Major Watts to Mangwe and Captain Fraser to Palla, where he was to relieve Captain Beresford, the latter then making the best of his way to Macloutsi, Captain Fraser remaining at Palla until the last detachment had passed through there.

Captain Walford, of the B.B.P., who was then at Macloutsi, had been in communication with me both as to the state of supplies there, and also as to the condition of the road on to Mangwe. The reports as regards the former were only fairly satisfactory, and we were anxiously looking for news of the expected convoy from the Transvaal. Captain Walford strongly advised us to take the Semokwe road to Mangwe—a road which had been made by the direction of Major-General Sir F. Carrington, K.C.M.G., when he was commandant of the B.B.P., and which we had proposed to use; he added that from all the reports he had received there were no hostile natives either near Macloutsi or on the road to Mangwe, and all the information we could obtain tended to strengthen the belief that we should meet with no opposition, at any rate, as far as the latter place.

Just before leaving Mafeking, on the 26th April, we received the news of the successful engagement the garrison of Bulawayo had had with the rebels in the neighbourhood of the town. It was the first time the natives had been thoroughly defeated, and it was no doubt this salutary lesson which rendered them very cautious in their future operations, and which drove any idea from their minds of an attack on the town, if such had ever existed.

On the 26th we passed in the coach the dismounted detachment who were near Pitsani, and No. 11 who were at Sandpits. On the morning of the 27th we found the Maxim detachment at Aasvogel Kop and No. 10 at Ramoutsa. We reached Gaberones the same evening, where the Signallers, Medical, and No. 9 detachments were all assembled. All these were well, and no serious *contretemps* had occurred. We reached Mochudi early on the 28th and found a fair supply of forage there, Messrs. Weil's agent having been successful in purchasing some in the district. From there on to Palla our progress was extremely slow, and Major Kershaw had not exaggerated the state of the road, as regards the carcases of the unfortunate victims to rinderpest, the stench from which was indeed appalling. We were glad to find a certain amount of grain at Kalikani, Suswan, and Lokala, and we

knew that more was on the road from Mochudi. We passed Nos. 7 and 8 detachments near Lokala. Palla was reached at half-past ten on the 29th. No. 6 detachment was there all well, and Captain Beresford had a satisfactory report to make, though he was getting anxious for the arrival of the expected convoy from Johannesburg. A telegram was received from Major Kershaw reporting his arrival at Macloutsi, and saying his information was to the effect that there were no Matabele south of Mangwe, thus confirming what Captain Walford had said. We also heard that Captain Fraser had left Mafeking for Palla by coach. The coach left Palla at midnight, and as we were now travelling on a different road to the column we saw no more troops. The road was very heavy and our progress proportionately slow, so that we did not reach Palapye till 5.30 p.m. on 1st May.

We found at Palapye Mr. Benson, who was negotiating with Khama about the railway, and the Hon. J. Scott Montagu, who was laid up with a rather sharp attack of fever. I got into communication at once with Lord Grey on the telegraph wires, and he gave a very reassuring account of the situation at Bulawayo. Forts had been established along the Mangwe road, and no attempt had been made to interfere with their construction or to attack the mail

coaches, the latter being furnished with a small escort from fort to fort.

We had brought up 200 rifles with us in the coach as far as Palapye; these were taken off there in order to make room for meal and flour which was asked for from Bulawayo, and Lord Grey asked me to arrange for the conveyance of these rifles to Macloutsi and Tuli (fifty miles east of the latter), whence they were to be despatched to Victoria (200 miles north-east of Tuli) for the use of the garrison there.* Lord Grey told me that they were only giving their horses at Bulawayo 3 lbs. of grain a day, and that their supplies of mealies and oats were running very short, and it was clearly important that we should if possible take in with us enough grain to last our horses for at any rate a few days after our arrival.

Major Kershaw telegraphed that he had received information that a convoy despatched by Mr. Zeiderberg, the mail coach contractor, consisting of ten mule wagons and thirty-six ox wagons containing grain and food-stuffs, with 215 horses and an escort of thirty white men and forty Cape Boys, had left Tuli on the 29th April, and was proceeding *via* the old hunters' road, and expected to be at its junction with the Semokwe road, seven miles north of the Shashi River, and about forty

* These rifles were despatched from Macloutsi on the 12th May.

miles from Macloutsi, on the 5th May. This looked as if there was no apprehension at Tuli of any Matabele attack south of Mangwe; but it made it more important than ever to push on our leading detachments so as to be in a position to render assistance to the convoy should it be required. The other reports received were to the effect that Captain Coope had arrived at Tati, and that Nos. 7 and 8 detachments had reached Palla.

We left Palapye by the mail cart that evening (1st May), and arrived at Macloutsi about noon on the 3rd. We found that Nos. 1 and 2 detachments had both arrived there, the strength in camp being 110 men, 115 horses, 5 wagons, and 64 mules. Much to our relief there arrived that evening the expected convoy from Pietersburg, consisting of fourteen ox wagons loaded with mealies and oats. The drivers had taken a comparatively unfrequented road, and so far the oxen showed no signs of being infected with the rinderpest.

Macloutsi had been the quarters of a large detachment of the Bechuanaland Border Police, and the barracks and stables, though in somewhat bad repair, proved a welcome shelter to our men and animals after their march up country; and Major Kershaw had made all arrangements whereby they might derive the most benefit from the brief rest that could be accorded them.

All reports agreed that there were no Matabele along the Semokwe road, and Lord Grey telegraphed to the effect that the road to Mangwe from Bulawayo was also clear, and so I determined to reorganize the corps at Macloutsi into squadrons of 150 men each, and to push on at any rate as far as Mangwe with each squadron as it came up.

Beyond Macloutsi no grain supplies, as has been said, had been laid down, and we had to carry on our wagons what we required for our animals. To do this it was necessary to still further lessen the amount of kits to be taken, and I accordingly issued the following order :—

“Owing to the paucity of provisions now in Bulawayo, it is of great importance that the column should take with it food for men and animals sufficient to last for some days after its arrival. Under these circumstances the amount of personal luggage carried on the wagons must be curtailed as much as possible, and the commanding officer feels sure that officers, non-commissioned officers, and men will understand the necessity for this, and loyally assist him in carrying out all instructions issued with this object.”

All kits were left at Macloutsi, only blankets and waterproof sheets being allowed on the wagons, and the men taking nothing with them except what they could carry in their wallets and haversacks.* Each man too carried fifty

* See Appendix G. This was not much to start a campaign with, the duration of which could not be foreseen ; but all cheer-

rounds of ammunition in his bandolier, reducing the amount to be carried on the wagons to 200 rounds per man. Fifteen days' meal and groceries, but only ten days' preserved meat, were carried for each man, there being a certain number of slaughter oxen in the neighbourhood, which I authorized Mr. Prentice, Messrs. Weil's agent, to purchase on behalf of the B.S.A. Company and issue to the troops at the rate of five per squadron.

We had arranged for the transfer of seven loads of forage from Macloutsi to the Shashi River, 35 miles on the road to Mangwe, and our first halting-place ; but notwithstanding all these efforts the seven wagons allotted to each squadron could only carry but a very limited amount of grain for our animals. Captain Coope, who had arrived at Tati on the 29th April, had been asked to try to forward grain from there to Mangwe to await our arrival ; but on the 5th May he telegraphed to say there was very little grain to be purchased or transport to be hired. The ox wagons that had come from Pietersburg were still at Macloutsi, and we opened negotiations with their joint proprietors, three young farmers, for the use of them to carry grain on from Macloutsi to Mangwe.

They would not undertake to do this at first at all, as they pointed out that traversing the district fully accepted the situation, and all kits were placed in store, and some two months later were brought up to the camp in the Matoppos, and restored to their owners.

where rinderpest was known to have been ripe meant the almost certain loss of all their oxen and wagons, as they would have no transport to remove the latter. They, however, eventually agreed to take five wagons, each loaded with 6000 lbs. of grain, on condition that £130 was paid for each wagon-load that reached Mangwe within eight days, reckoning from the 6th May; and further, that in case of wagons breaking down £16 was to be paid for every 15 miles traversed. The price was indeed a high one, but we had practically no alternative if our animals were to reach their destination fit for service in the field, and I accordingly agreed.

With these arrangements made we were ready to start off with the first squadron as soon as No. 3 detachment arrived. I hoped they would reach Macloutsi on the 5th at latest, but on that day a messenger came on ahead from Lieutenant McQueen, who commanded, saying his mules were very much done up, and that he could not arrive till the following day, the 6th.

During our halt at Macloutsi we had some practice in Mounted Infantry drill; the men were all very keen and had settled down into their saddles wonderfully during the march.

Lieutenant McQueen's detachment arrived on the afternoon of the 6th. His mules were certainly in poor condition as compared with the others,

and there was an undue proportion of sore backs among the horses, owing to the "Swazi" saddles with which this detachment had been supplied. These saddles we found altogether unsuitable, and we got rid of them gradually as the number of our horses decreased, and retained all the Government Mounted Infantry saddles.

On the whole, however, the horses and mules of the leading detachments arrived at Macloutsi in wonderfully good condition considering the long march they had made and the short time they had taken over it, and this satisfactory state of things was maintained by all the other troops, the only exception being the mules belonging to the wagons of the Maxim detachment. These wagons, on which were packed the guns and ammunition, were slightly more heavily loaded than any of the others, and they were unfortunately further handicapped by having been provided with incompetent drivers. All our subsequent experiences proved that with mules the least overloading of the wagons resulted inevitably in a delay and possibly in a breakdown. The men were in very good health. There had been one or two cases of slight illness on the march, and one or two of the leading squadrons had to be left temporarily at Macloutsi, but the majority seemed all the better for the march. It was very undesirable that we should take up to

Bulawayo any men who seemed unlikely to be able to stand the hard work before us, and Major Kershaw and the other officers who succeeded him at Macloutsi had strict instructions that all men who seemed weak were to be left at Macloutsi pending Dr. Michell's arrival to pronounce as to their fitness for further service. So too any men who had given trouble on the march, and whose hearts did not seem to be in their work, might at their discretion be discharged and sent down from Macloutsi. In this way a good many men who would have been nothing but encumbrances to us were got rid of.

We arranged to start with the first (A) squadron on the afternoon of the 7th, marching all night to our first halting-place on the Shashi River, which was thirty-five miles distance—a long journey—but the only place where we could obtain water. To allow the transport wagons more time, we started them off early in the morning with instructions to go as far as Macloutsi, where they could obtain water, halt there till 4 p.m., and then resume their journey till we overtook them.

The squadrons were now constituted as follows :

A. Captain Bowden.

No. 1 Troop	.	.	Lieut. Wood.
No. 2 Troop	.	.	Lieut. Cashel.
No. 3 Troop	.	.	Lieut. McQueen.

B. Captain Turner.

No. 4 Troop	.	.	Lieut. Constable. Lieut. Oakley.
No. 5 Troop	.	.	Captain Satchwell. Lieut. May.
No. 6. Troop	.	.	Lieut. Williams. Lieut. Masterson.

C. Major Kershaw.

No. 7 Troop	.	.	Captain Fowler. Lieut. Mathias.
No. 8 Troop	.	.	Lieut. M. Nichol. Lieut. Forbes.
No. 9 Troop	.	.	Captain Murray. Lieut. Ranstone.

D. Captain Beresford.

No. 10 Troop	.	.	Lieut. Tomlinson. Lieut. Heyman. Lieut. Lees.
No. 11 Troop	.	.	Lieut. MacGeean.

E. Captain Drury.

No. 12 Troop	.	.	Lieut. Murray.
No. 13 Troop	.	.	Lieut. Abbot.
No. 14 Troop	.	.	Lieut. Cazalet.

Maxims.—Capt. Wheeler. Lieuts. Pyke and Michell.

Signallers.—Captain Dent.

Medical.—Dr. Michell. Dr. Morris.

Dismounted.—Lieut. Hurrell. Lieut. Lovell.

Captain Turner took command of B Squadron (who were nearly all Kimberley men) until Captain Straker arrived from Bulawayo, when he resumed the duties of Adjutant.

The Johannesburg contingent formed C Squadron, and the command was entrusted to Major

Kershaw, who remained at Macloutsi to bring them on as soon as they arrived.

Captain Beresford commanded D Squadron until the arrival of Captain Fraser, when the latter took charge of it, Captain Beresford joining my Staff.*

Lieutenant Villiers and I accompanied A Squadron on the march to Mangwe. We left Macloutsi at 5 p.m. in a heavy shower of rain, which fortunately did not last long, and marched, with the usual halt, till 10 p.m., when we off-saddled and halted till 2 a.m. The ground was very rough, deep sand in many parts and large boulders in others, and it was as well we had sent on the wagons to do the earlier part of the trek by daylight. We overtook them at the halting-place, and marched on with them to the Shashi River—the boundary of Matabeleland—which we reached at 7 a.m. The Shashi is a broad sand river, like most of the others in those parts, with steep banks. There were plenty of pools with good water.

After the long trek the previous night we had a long rest till 3 p.m., and then only did a short march till 6.30 p.m., when we outspanned for the night, as, although no Matabele had been reported near, the road had not been traversed since the rising, and I did not think it prudent, with this small force and through the thick bush we were

* The itinerary of the march from Macloutsi to Mangwe is given in Appendix H.

entering, to continue marching by night. Our general dispositions were to have one troop as advanced guard with flanking parties on either side of the road, one as a rear guard, and a third with the wagons. We had "Cossack posts" out when halted in the daytime, and the usual picquet at night, when we formed a small laager with our wagons.

On the 9th May we did two short treks from 5 a.m. to 9 a.m., and from 1.30 p.m. to 5.30 p.m. The road, which ran along the Semokwe River, was very bad, and we did not do more than 15 miles in all. We were, however, delayed by the axle of one of the wagons breaking, necessitating its abandonment and the load being divided among the others. One horse was seized with the fatal sickness in the morning and died in less than an hour.

On the 10th we had a good hard road, fairly level, and made much better progress, doing 15 miles in the morning and eight in the afternoon, halting for the night about 78 miles from Maccloutsi. We passed Fraser's Farm in the morning. He had remained in his isolated position all through, being joined by another man called Montgomery, who owned the adjacent farm. He reported that the Matabele had not attempted to come so far south, and that Zeiderberg's convoys had passed through on the 1st inst. This was

very welcome intelligence. We lost another horse of sickness that evening.

In the morning one of the flanking parties had disturbed a lion, which bounded away in the long grass. Villiers and one or two others tried to follow it up to get a shot at it, but they lost all trace of it in the bush. Lions are frequently seen along this road, and they have more than once seized the oxen of transport wagons, but they will rarely approach anything like a large column.

The road continued good the next day (11th), and we did between 19 and 20 miles in our two treks. During the march a messenger reached me from Mangwe, bringing the news that Captain Coope, who had been joined by Lieutenant Lowther, had got together 250 of Radikladi's (Khama's brother) men, and had marched into the district north-west of Tati, where he had heard a Matabele impi was raiding.

We were only about 18 miles from Mangwe, and Villiers and I rode on ahead of the column early in the morning, and arrived at Mangwe about 8.30 a.m. We found Major Bodle, late Chief Inspector of the B.S.A. Company's Police, had arrived there by coach from Mafeking. I appointed him to the Staff of the column, and he proved a most valuable acquisition.

The fort at Mangwe had been originally made in 1893, and had been improved and enlarged

when the rising broke out. The garrison was mostly Dutch, and consisted of farmers and prospectors from the neighbourhood who had collected there with all their families and belongings. Any value the fort might have had as a defensive work was quite nullified by the collection of huts, wagons, and paraphernalia of all kinds huddled together inside.

The squadron reached Mangwe about 3 p.m., and we laagered some little distance from the fort; and shortly afterwards we were joined by Major Watts, who had travelled up by coach from Mafeking after he had completed all the arrangements for the despatch of the last detachments. He was able to give excellent accounts of the progress of the different detachments along the road, and eager to know all we had done and what our next steps were to be.

Captain Van Royen, the commandant of the fort at Mangwe, had received intelligence that a Matabele impi, bent on raiding, were starting from near Bulawayo to travel west of the main road into the fertile district west and north-west of Mangwe—and he was most anxious that we should divert, at any rate, part of the column in this direction. I pointed out to him that our first duty was to get touch with Bulawayo, and that our subsequent movements must depend on the state of affairs there and the general

situation. However, I communicated this report to Lord Grey by telegraph, and told him that as the coaches were still running and the road to Bulawayo was evidently quite clear, I proposed pushing on with the 150 men we had with us without waiting for any further detachments. I was most anxious that my force should not come into Bulawayo itself, and suggested that we should concentrate at Fig Tree, the northern extremity of the Mangwe Pass, about thirty miles from Bulawayo, where a fort had been constructed, and where there was a telegraph station. This would be within comparatively easy distance of Bulawayo; and from there, should the reports of the Matabele impi moving south-westward prove correct, and the services of the force not be urgently required elsewhere, a movement might be made to intercept them.

To this plan Lord Grey agreed, and as it was desirable to push on as quickly as possible, more especially in view of the unsanitary condition of Mangwe and the prevalence of "horse-sickness" in the district, we arranged to start again early on the morning of the 14th.

We arranged that each squadron should halt at Mangwe for one day only, Major Watts being directed to remain there until the arrival of B Squadron and accompany it to Fig Tree.

The five wagons with grain sent on from

Macloutsi had arrived, and Mr. Armstrong, the Native Commissioner, had managed to purchase some more in the district and also procure some slaughter oxen, so we were able to take some of the latter with each squadron and replenish our wagons. We found an excellent farrier at Mangwe, named Roberts, whom we enrolled in the corps and left there to shoe as many horses as he could of each squadron as they passed through. Here, too, we were joined by Lieutenant Taylor, who owned a farm and some property, and who offered his services. He was an excellent rifle shot, had a wonderful knowledge of the country and of the natives, and proved a most efficient leader of scouts in all our subsequent operations. We had another acquisition in Troop Sergeant-Major Blatherwick, an old non-commissioned officer of the B.B.P., who rendered excellent service throughout the campaign.

We left Mangwe at 5.20 a.m. on the 14th, the road almost immediately entering the pass through the Matoppo Hills. We took every possible precaution against surprise, but there were no signs of any of the rebels. As we wound through the tortuous defile, where position after position might have been taken up to bar our progress, and held successfully by a few good rifle shots against very large odds, we all felt that whatever might have been the reason

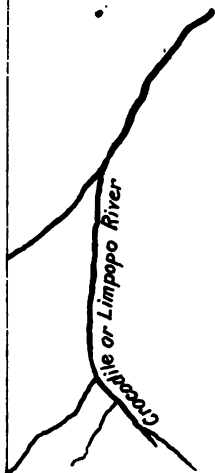
we could never be sufficiently thankful to our opponents for not having, as soon as they determined to rise, seized and held the Mangwe Pass. Any attempt to turn it, as was made by the B.B.P., under Colonel Gould-Adams in 1893, necessitated a long detour, and was rendered very difficult owing to the scarcity of water. In the former campaign the Matabele, under Gambo, Lobengula's son-in-law, had occupied the pass at first, but had then abandoned it to attack the B.B.P. on the Mpakwe River; and after their defeat there had neglected to re-occupy it, and allowed Colonel Gould-Adams' column to pass through unmolested. Now that forts had been established along the road our passage became, even if opposed, comparatively easy—though as these forts were necessarily some ten miles apart, there were plenty of opportunities for a bold and determined foe to inflict considerable loss on a column during its progress.

We halted about 10 a.m. in a comparatively open spot, where there had been a store; this had been burnt and everything taken from it. Shortly after our arrival the coach from Mangwe came up, and in it were Sir Richard Martin, K.C.M.G., on his way to Bulawayo, with his Secretary, Mr. Long, and Mr. Ronald Moncrieffe. Sir Richard Martin asked me to accompany him to Bulawayo in the coach, as

he was anxious to discuss the situation and arrange the various steps to be taken after he had seen Lord Grey; and I accordingly handed over the command of the squadron to Major Bodle and started in the coach with him.

We visited the forts along the road as we passed, the first being Fort Matoli, with Captain Luck, of the Bulawayo Field Force, in command, about fifteen miles from Mangwe: a square earth breastwork with a ditch round it, constructed in an open spot near the road, where there was a fair field of fire; Fort Halsted, called after its commander, an officer in the B.F.F., about six miles further on; and Fig Tree, the latter thirty miles from Mangwe—both on koppies ingeniously prepared for defence. We found the water supply at Fig Tree anything but plentiful, and on this account I hoped to come upon a better place for the concentration of the force. From Fig Tree to Bulawayo the country is nearly all open veldt, and from the three forts—"Mabukwatwani," "Khami," and "Matabele Wilsons"—extensive views could be obtained of the surrounding country. All these forts had garrisons of from twenty to thirty men, but they had very few horses, and what they had were in too poor condition to be of any use for any extended reconnoitring or patrolling. We reached Bulawayo about 10 p.m.

Map of California



Scale.



Numbers denote Miles (going North)
between intermediate stations.

CHAPTER V.

THE SITUATION IN BULAWAYO AND OPERATIONS UP TO THE END OF MAY.

WE were met by Captain Nicholson and Mr. Benson, and were glad to hear that matters were fairly quiet in the town. A system of defence had been organized; a most elaborate "laager" had been constructed in the Market Square, into which all the women and children went every night. The hospital, club-house, and other buildings had been prepared for defence. Several buildings on the outskirts of the town had been fortified, and were occupied by garrisons as outworks every night. Night guards and outposts were duly furnished, and the country round watched by day by look-out parties posted on the highest buildings in the town, and by mounted patrols. Altogether there seemed little fear of the Matabele being able to "rush" the town if they had made any attempt to do so, which they never did, and since the severe chastisement inflicted on them on the 21st April they had been altogether

much more cautious in their movements. So confident were Lord Grey and the officers of the garrison that any attack on the town was now out of the question that a strong column, consisting of 30 officers, 573 men, and 100 "friendlies," with one 7-pr. gun, 1 Hotchkiss, 1 Maxim, 1 Nordenfeldt, under Colonel Napier, the officer commanding the Bulawayo Field Force, had been despatched on the 11th May towards Gwelo to attack and disperse the rebels in that district, and eventually to join hands with the column from Salisbury, which Mr. Rhodes was accompanying.

Many different opinions have been expressed as to how far the utmost was done by the authorities at Bulawayo, when the first indications of disaffection among the Matabele became apparent, to stem the tide of rebellion, and prevent the rising from assuming the proportions it ultimately did. It has been argued that had a force of 300 or 400 men been despatched at once to the disaffected districts to deal promptly and decisively with the people who had committed murders and other acts of lawlessness, and the indunas who had incited them to these crimes, the natives in other parts of the country would have hesitated to throw in their lot with them, and thereby expose themselves to the same punishment; and that it was only by the display of weakness (as they regarded the immunity enjoyed by the murderers, and the retire-

ment of all the white population into Bulawayo) that they were induced to listen to the "witch-doctors" and others, who were persuading them that the brief period of the white man's rule had come to an end, and that the country was once more theirs.

No doubt the prompt display of power which the appearance of such a force would have shown would have exercised a wonderful effect throughout the country, but it must be remembered that at the time the first murders were committed there were practically no white police in the country, that the native police were suspected with just cause of complicity in the rising, and that the only body of men that could be put in the field who had any training at all were the Rhodesian Horse Volunteers, of whom not more than some 300 were on the spot, and even if there had been more there were no rifles for them. To have despatched this force, or a large proportion of it, 80 or 100 miles away from Bulawayo, thereby leaving the town with its population and women and children (whose numbers might be expected to increase daily as the news of the rising spread among the settlers in the outlying districts), would have been to incur the risk of a disaster such as is too horrible even to contemplate.

Mr. Duncan, on whom, as Acting Administrator, devolved the responsibility of deciding the

measures to be taken, considered that the very limited resources at his disposal, in the way of men, horses, and arms, would not admit of his doing more than rescuing, wherever possible, the settlers and their families from the outlying districts, and of rendering secure from attack the town of Bulawayo and its population until such time as reinforcements could arrive, and of keeping open, if possible, communication with the south. Few, I think, would have attempted more, and to do even this was a sufficiently difficult and arduous task. It was no easy matter to organize out of the material at hand—anxious and willing though all were to take a part and do their share—a force which would prove itself efficient in a situation which would have tried the most highly-trained and disciplined troops. Colonels Napier and Sprechley, who had both taken leading parts in the campaign of 1893, and Captain Macfarlane, late of the 9th Lancers, all performed good service, the latter particularly distinguishing himself as a commander on several occasions, notably in the decisive defeat inflicted on the rebels on April 24th.

Too much credit cannot be given to Captain Nicholson, who, throughout all the trying period that elapsed before any reinforcements arrived, worked with unflagging energy and perseverance at all the different arrangements necessary for the safety and protection of the town and its inhabitants,

and at the same time by his never-failing tact and courtesy amid difficulties which only those on the spot could realize and appreciate, induced all to co-operate loyally with the authorities, and to undertake cheerfully the parts assigned to them.

The day after our arrival Sir R. Martin had a consultation with Lord Grey with a view of deciding how the relief column could be best utilized at first.

The column, which had left under Colonel Napier on the 11th May, had so far denuded the town of men and horses that no great assistance could be expected from the garrison in any other offensive movement; and while this column could be safely left to reckon with the hostile parties collecting to the north-east and east, there were impi on the Umguza and Khami Rivers, to the north-west, who were reported to be in considerable numbers. These, however, could not be dealt with until the relief column had arrived in sufficient numbers, and, meanwhile, Lord Grey was specially anxious that a fortified post should be established at Hope Fountain, a mission station, situated in a fertile valley about nine miles south-east of Bulawayo. The houses there had been destroyed by the rebels, but there were considerable quantities of mealies and Kaffir corn lying in the fields still unreaped, which it was very desirable should not fall into the hands of the Matabele. It was also

hoped that by the employment of coolies in the valley, under the protection of a fort, vegetables might be grown and prove an immense boon for the hospital and for the population generally.

Sir R. Martin accordingly directed me to establish this post there as soon as possible. It had been agreed that the corps should concentrate at Khami Fort, about twelve miles from Bulawayo, instead of at Fig Tree, and orders were sent at once to Major Bodle to bring A Squadron on there.

The next morning I started by the coach for Khami, accompanied by Captain Straker, who was to take charge of B Squadron on its arrival. When we reached the first fort (Matabele Wilsons), six miles out, we received a report that there was a party of Matabele on ahead waiting for the coach. We halted the coach close to the fort and sent forward as many men as could be mounted from the fort to go ahead and reconnoitre down the road. After about half an hour they sent back word that the road was clear, and the coach proceeded on its way to Khami without incident. It appears, however, that no sooner had the coach started than a party of the rebels swooped down on a number of sick horses which had been sent out to graze there from Bulawayo, as being too feeble to work, and drove them off, the garrison of the fort being unable to pursue them owing to the absence of their horses.

A Squadron reached Khami in the afternoon, and we formed a camp outside the fort, the latter, though well built on a well-selected site, being far too small for our requirements. It was not till late in the evening that we heard of the loss of the horses from Matabele Wilsons; and I sent off Captain Bowden with his squadron at daybreak the next morning to try to recover them. He followed the spoor for some distance, when the horses had apparently scattered in some thick bush near the Khami River, where all trace of them was lost. It was an unfortunate incident, and showed us that though the Matabele might not care to make any concerted attack on us, they were at any rate watching our movements pretty closely, and were ready enough to seize any opportunity of causing us annoyance.

That afternoon Major Watts arrived from Mangwe. Sir R. Martin had asked me if I could spare him for a while to act as his Staff officer, and I of course had no objection; he accordingly went straight on to Bulawayo. Mr. Carnegie, the owner of one of the houses at Hope Fountain which had been burnt by the rebels, and who was to guide us there and help us with his knowledge of the neighbourhood, also arrived in camp, as did Mr. Ronald Moncrieffe, who had come out to South Africa to see the country, and on hearing of the disturbance in Matabeleland had

hurried on there, as he was most anxious to see some fighting, and joined my Staff as galloper, remaining with us throughout the campaign, and rendering us very valuable assistance.

The next day (the 18th) B Squadron, consisting of 9 officers and 135 non-commissioned officers and men, 151 horses, 7 wagons, and 87 mules, arrived in camp. They had made a very good march from Macloutsi, and their horses were in very good condition.

We lost no opportunity in giving instruction now in patrol duties by day and outposts by night; and, considering the want of experience of the majority, the men picked up a knowledge of what was required very readily. We always endeavoured to work by troops and squadrons all the outposts, a patrol being as far as possible furnished by the same unit. Though Khami had its advantages as regards position and water supply, we found it terribly exposed and bitterly cold at nights and in the early morning. We formed a small square entrenchment near the fort, the men lying close to the trench in the ranks, and the horses being picketed in lines in the centre.

We stood to arms every morning at 5 a.m., and remained under arms till it was fairly daylight and all the Cossack posts for the day were in their places. All fires and lights had to be

extinguished by 9 p.m., by which hour every man had to be in his place for the night.

On the 19th we received intelligence that an impi was marching from the eastern Matoppo Hills in the direction of Fig Tree, and a small party under Lieutenants Wood and Moncrieffe was sent out to reconnoitre. They went about twelve miles in a south-easterly direction, and came upon some armed natives driving off cattle into the hills. They managed to surround them, and the latter laid down their arms, and seventy-three were brought into camp as prisoners. They were sent into Bulawayo the next morning, when, after a prolonged investigation, they were declared to be "friendlies." We were naturally a good deal chaffed at our first encounter with the Matabele. The "friendlies" were sent back to our camp to assist in camp work. We did not, however, give them back their arms, and they gradually melted away and disappeared.

On the 20th, leaving B Squadron at Khami, we went with A Squadron to Hope Fountain—a distance of about twelve miles across a stretch of beautifully open, undulating veldt, but we saw no sign of any natives.

The next morning we selected a site for a fortified post on a high spur overlooking the valley and mission station. The houses of Mr. Carnegie and Mr. Helm, the two missionaries who

had lived there for many years, had been completely burnt, only the bare walls standing, and all the furniture and property wantonly destroyed. The garrison for the post was to be furnished by fifty men of the Bulawayo Field Force, and they arrived on the 22nd. All that day we had officers' patrols out scouring the neighbourhood in all directions; but though they came upon several recently-deserted kraals they saw no natives. In the evening we heard that parties of natives having been seen in the neighbourhood of Government House, Bulawayo, B Squadron had been sent for by Sir R. Martin to occupy and garrison it, and had left Khami that morning.

On the 23rd Letter A Squadron returned to Khami, but one troop under Lieutenant McQueen was left at Hope Fountain in addition to the garrison of the fort, which, about 12 noon, was suddenly attacked by about 200 Matabele, who had evidently watched the departure of the column and believed there was only a very small party left. Captain Halstead and Lieutenant McQueen had no difficulty in driving them off, and a small mounted party pursued them for some distance. We had no men hit, but lost a horse and a mule. In view of any further attacks Lieutenant McQueen's troop was left at Hope Fountain as a support to Captain Halstead.

Major Kershaw with C Squadron, consisting

of 6 officers, 145 men, 180 horses, 7 wagons, and 93 mules, arrived at Khami that morning, as well as Lieutenant Pyke with two Maxim guns. Captain Coope also arrived with his scouts and his native contingent. He gave the following account of his movements from Tati :—

He had arrived at Tati on the 29th April, and at once saw the chief of the Bakaroutsi, who live on the Tati, and the Mangwatos, who live on the Ramaquabane River, east of the Tati-Bulawayo roads, who agreed to supply men of their tribes for the contingent, each man to receive 2s. a day pay, with 2s. a day for each horse supplied.

Mr. Drake from Tati, and Mr. Smitherman from Mangwe, joined the contingent as lieutenants, and information was received in Tati on the 9th May to the effect that the Matabele from the Inyaman Khlovo district, west of Bulawayo, were marching south to attack Lebena's kraal, where there was a trading station and the Monarch Reef, an important mining centre distant about eighty and forty miles from Tati respectively.

By the 10th May 240 men had joined from the following tribes :—

- 50 Mangwatos, in charge of Teoletso (Khama's brother).
- 150 Bakaroutsis, under the Chiefs Rawe and Majoriphis.
- 40 Makalakas, in charge of Ra-ka-Manyan.

They were all armed with Martini-Henry rifles, 200 of which had been furnished by the B.S.A. Company from Mafeking, and forty supplied by the chiefs. Each man had a blanket given him, and carried 100 rounds of ammunition, forty in bandoliers made by themselves, and sixty in bags worn round their waists.

With this contingent Captain Coope marched to the Monarch Mine, which he found the men of the Tati Concession Company under Mr. Jones, the manager, had prepared for defence, and to Lebena's kraal, which he reached on the 13th May. There was no transport available, but he had managed to purchase twenty head of cattle, which he took with him to feed his men. No Matabele were encountered, though they were reported to have come down to the district, but to have retired north again on hearing of his advance. The march of the contingent through this district had no doubt an excellent effect on the inhabitants, who would have added considerably to our embarrassment if they had joined the rebels, but who remained loyal throughout. Capt. Coope, after satisfying himself that all Matabele had left the district, marched his contingent to Mangwe, and thence on to Khami Fort.

We were now quite strong enough to attack the impis which had collected north-west of Bulawayo, between the Khami and Umguza Rivers, and

Sir R. Martin accordingly directed me to bring into Bulawayo the following day all the available troops from Khami. We had a consultation with Mr. Colembrander as to the position of the rebels, and from the reports he had received he was pretty confident that we should come upon them somewhere near a farm called Tremance, about ten miles north-west of the town. There were two roads leading to this—one from Bulawayo itself and one from Government House—which joined some two miles north of Tremance, and it was possible that the natives might be on either road. The best chance of forcing them to an engagement lay in coming upon them at dawn, so it was arranged that Major Watts with one party should move by the Government House road, and I with another column by the road from the town, both marching by night, and joining our forces at the junction of the two roads.

We marched in from Khami to Bulawayo with officers, 278 non-commissioned officers and men, and two Maxims, together with the native contingent of 184 men, under Captain Coope, early on Sunday morning, the 24th May, and remained there for the day. I saw Major Watts, and arranged that I should start with my column at 10 p.m. and he at 11 p.m., and that if during the march either column heard the sound of firing it was to march to the assistance of the other.

We took no wagons of any kind with us. Dr. Andrews accompanied the column with stretchers, carried by some of the native contingent, and Captain Nicholson had arranged in case of an engagement—the firing of which would be clearly heard at Bulawayo—to send out an ambulance wagon at daybreak. Each man carried two days' rations and 150 rounds of ammunition, 100 being in the wallets and 50 in the bandoliers. Great-coats were worn and one blanket carried on the saddles, and all nosebags were filled before starting.

Major Watts' column consisted of B Squadron of our force—now known officially as the Matabeleland Relief Force—some of the Matabeleland Mounted Police under Captain Southey, and of Gifford's Horse of the B.F.F. under Captain Knapp, and a detachment of Colembrander's Cape Boy Corps; in all 180 mounted men, 90 Cape Boys, and one Maxim gun.

We left at the hours arranged, and about 2 a.m., when we had marched about eight miles, firing was heard on our right, apparently from two to three miles off, indicating that Major Watts' column had come upon the enemy. We wheeled at once to the right and marched across the veldt in the direction of the firing. Though it was bright moonlight we had to get through some rather thick bush and our progress was consequently slow, it taking us nearly an hour to

traverse the distance. During all that time firing had been going on at intervals, and when we reached Major Watts we found that he had become engaged with a considerable force of the enemy, who had only retired on hearing our approach.

Mr. H. Rice-Hamilton, of the Bulawayo Field Force, had been wounded, and one Cape Boy killed and another wounded. Owing to the obscurity and thick bush accurate firing was impossible, but some loss had certainly been inflicted on the rebels. The moon had now gone down and we bivouacked on the ground till dawn. We were afraid the enemy might have retreated altogether, and at daybreak Captain Coope with his scouts went forward to reconnoitre. He came back with the intelligence that the rebels were in strong force about a mile off. I gave orders for the whole force to be in readiness for a start, and went forward to make a personal reconnaissance. I found the enemy were occupying a strong position on a ridge. They opened fire as we approached, and were evidently in force, but it was impossible to estimate their numbers.

At 6.30 a.m. the whole force moved out, Captain Coope's scouts covering the left flank, Lieutenant Taylor's the centre, and Gifford's Horse the right. The remainder of the force advanced in echelon from the centre—A Squadron, under Captain Bowden, forming the centre; B Squadron, under

Captain Straker, supporting the right flank in echelon of troops; and C Squadron, under Major Kershaw, the left in the same formation; Coope's native contingent, under Mr. Drake, supporting the left, and Colembrander's Cape Boys the right—these being the only dismounted men we had. The two Maxims were on either flank of A Squadron; the right flank was under Major Watts, and the left under Major Kershaw.

The troops had hardly got into formation when the rebels opened fire on the scouts. I pushed forward No. 1 troop of A Squadron, under Lieutenant Wood, to support Gifford's Horse, and together they charged the enemy's position. The charge was supported by the remainder of A Squadron and by B and C Squadrons on the right and left. The whole of the enemy's position was carried at once, and they were driven back from ridge to ridge for a distance of about two miles, when they scattered in all directions.

Three troops continued the pursuit for two or three miles further, the enemy retreating over the Umguza river. The force was formed up near this river about 8.30 a.m., having burned all the rebel scherms or huts in the vicinity, and captured some cattle. Our casualties were only two wounded, John Slowey and Arthur William Peacock, of Gifford's Horse, both severely. Mr. Hay, of the Maxim Hotel, who had come out

as a volunteer, had his horse shot under him. The enemy's force is believed to have been about 1000. It is difficult to estimate their losses, but they probably lost from fifty to sixty killed.

Having sent back the wounded to the road to meet the ambulance wagon, escorted by No. 8 troop of C Squadron, we rested till 1.30 p.m., when we started off again in a south-westerly direction, Mr. Mullins, one of the Native Commissioners, who was acting as guide, stating that we should get good water at a spruit some eight miles distance before coming to the Khami River, the intention being to halt there for the night and attack another impi, believed to be about three miles further west, the following day.

There were no signs of any of the enemy till 4.30 p.m., when we approached the place fixed for our halt; then as the advanced guard was crossing the Mpoponas stream (a branch of the Mahlatazan River) the scouts ahead came upon the rebel impi occupying a strong position on a rocky koppie with some difficult ground in front, and opened fire on them. I pushed forward the advanced guard to support the scouts and succeeding squadrons to the right and left respectively, as they came up. The enemy clung to their position for some time, but our line dismounted, drove them gradually back, and after one or two attempts to work round our

flanks they retreated in disorder. This was about 5.30 p.m., and with no more daylight it was impossible to attempt any pursuit. The column laagered on the captured position for the night, and the enemy made no attempt to molest us.

The following morning I sent the scouts out to ascertain the whereabouts of the enemy, but they could not discover any of them within three or four miles of the laager, the tracks showing they had scattered in all directions, the bulk of them apparently having gone north.

Our casualties were Trooper C. Hay, of the scouts, killed, and one of the Bamangwato chiefs and another native wounded. It was wonderful more men were not hit, as the firing was pretty heavy at one time, but the rebels must have fired very high; there were a good many narrow escapes. Trooper Begbie, of the scouts, and Sergeant Neumeyer especially distinguished themselves by dragging poor Hay under cover when the latter fell mortally wounded. The enemy's numbers must have been about 1500, and they probably lost from 70 to 80 killed.

Our horses were too exhausted for another heavy day's work, so we returned to Khami and Bulawayo, sending C Squadron under Major Kershaw to make a reconnaissance of some ruins on the Khami River, reported to be the stronghold of the natives in this district. He came back

to the camp in the evening reporting that the position was a very strong one, difficult of access owing to thick bush and rocks, but that it was apparently unoccupied.

We were all pleased with our first encounter with the Matabele. The men had behaved with great gallantry and dash, and though the firing was at times rather wild, and there was the inevitable waste of ammunition, we hoped that these faults would decrease as time went on and they had more experience.

We were by no means impressed with the prowess of our adversaries. They had clearly shown that they could not stand a determined attack, even with all the advantages of a strong position and considerable superiority of numbers, and their shooting was execrable. We had to learn subsequently that they had amongst them a certain number who could shoot pretty straight when ensconced in sheltered positions among rocks and caves. There was certainly no co-operation among the several indunas. The party we encountered in the afternoon were quite distinct from those we fought in the morning, and evidently as we entirely surprised them, no attempt had been made by the latter to warn the others, though it would have been quite easy for them to have done so. The advantages of a night march and an attack at dawn, when the enemy were known to be in position, were clearly

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apparent, and this method was always adopted when possible in subsequent operations.

On the 27th May Captain Beresford with D Squadron and the Maxim detachment, in all 8 officers, 155 non-commissioned officers and men, 180 horses, 10 wagons, and 134 mules, arrived all well, but very disappointed to hear they had missed two engagements, and on the following day one of the guns of the Mountain Battery, under Lieutenant McCulloch, R.A., also arrived.

In the evening Lord Grey and Mr. Benson rode out to the camp and congratulated us warmly on our successful engagements.

The native contingent from Tati had not proved a great success in the two engagements; the mounted men had done a fair share of work, but nothing would induce the foot detachment to go to the front until the Matabele were in full retreat, while by their wild and indiscriminate firing they were really a source of considerable danger to our own men. I reported their shortcomings to Lord Grey and recommended their disbandment and despatch to their own countries, and this was done. We were able to form a scout detachment now, composed of men who were known to be good shots and had had previous experience of the veldt and of the natives. Captain Coope took command of one section of this detachment and Lieutenant Taylor of the other, and they rendered

very valuable service in all the subsequent movements and operations.

We were getting hard pushed to find grain for our horses, and Sir R. Martin ordered me to take a portion of the force to Hope Fountain (where there was much better grazing than at Khami), clear the neighbourhood of any rebel parties that might be about, and collect all the grain we could find; and we accordingly arrived there on the 29th with 28 officers and 455 men, leaving 56 men under Major Kershaw at Khami.

For the next three days we had patrols of considerable strength out from Hope Fountain in all directions, hoping to come across some of the enemy's parties, but without success. We managed, however, to collect a considerable quantity of mealies and Kaffir corn, which was most acceptable to the poor horses, who had begun to feel the effect of insufficient food.

Meantime the column which left Bulawayo on the 11th May under Colonel Napier had been working through the district north-east of the town. After small actions on the 12th and 13th—in the former of which a party of rebels were driven from Thabas Induna by artillery fire, and in the latter a large body routed by a mounted detachment under Captains Grey and Van Niekirk—they had moved along the main Salisbury road till the 19th, when they met the Salisbury column, with which was

Mr. Rhodes, near the drift over the River Shangani. Colonel Napier then divided his force, sending 150 mounted and 150 dismounted under Colonel Spreckley, with a Maxim and a 7-pr. gun, to work along the eastern side of the Inceza and Euxla range of mountains, while he with the main column proceeded by the western side of the same hills. On the following day a cavalry patrol from Colonel Napier's force, under Captain Grey and Van Niekirk, had had an engagement with a large force of the rebels, killing from 90 to 100 of them, and losing two men killed and three wounded. They were supported by a detachment under Captain Selous. The main column met with no further opposition, though they captured a number of cattle and burned all the kraals in the neighbourhood. They found several bodies of white men and women who had been murdered, which they buried. Colonel Spreckley did not meet any force of the rebels, but he too captured a quantity of sheep, oxen, and grain, and burnt a number of kraals. He also came across the bodies of several murdered whites, including those of Dr. and Mrs. Langsford, the Ross family, and others. The two columns reached Bulawayo on the 2nd June, Mr. Rhodes having gone on ahead and arrived there the previous day.

On the 2nd June Major-General Sir F. Carrington, K.C.M.G., arrived in Bulawayo to take command of

the troops, accompanied by Lieut.-Colonel R. S. Baden-Powell as Chief Staff Officer, Captain C. B. Vyvyan, Brigade Major, and Lieutenant V. Ferguson, *Aide-de-Camp*.

The following day I went on from Hope Fountain to report myself to him and ask for his instructions. He congratulated me on the successful march up of the Relief Force, and of the good work they had already done. He informed me that he intended, in the first place, to thoroughly clear of rebels all the districts west and north of Bulawayo, and for this purpose was sending out at once three columns, one to work down the Khami and Guai Rivers, the second down the Umguza, and the third to Inyati and Shiloh. I was to command the first, with 500 of my own men; Captain McFarlane the second, and Colonel Spreckley the third. B Squadron, and 50 additional men I was to detail of the M.R.F., were to accompany Captain McFarlane's patrol.

My column was to go as far as the junction of the Guai River with the Umguza, a distance of about 80 miles, at which point we were to be met by Captain McFarlane's party; and the return march was to be conducted as might be decided on then. We were to take 20 days' supplies with us.

On the 2nd June our last squadron (E), under Captain Drury, arrived, and with the exception of the dismounted detachment under Lieutenant

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Hurrell, and the Cape Boy contingent under Major Robertson, who were still on their way, our force was now complete.

The men had kept in very good health so far, there being only a few cases of fever; but a good many were suffering from veldt sores, due, no doubt, to the want of fresh vegetables, which were of course unobtainable. We had to leave a garrison at Hope Fountain, Captain Halstead's detachment of the B.F.F. having been withdrawn to join Captain McFarlane's column, so we selected those who, while quite capable of performing garrison duty, were most likely to derive benefit from a spell of comparative inaction. Lieutenant Pyke was appointed to command, and one Maxim gun was left with the garrison. Dr. Morris was left at Hope Fountain, Dr. Michell, who had arrived with Letter E Squadron, accompanying the column down the Guai River.

On the 4th June we marched across to Khami Fort, preparatory to our start the following day.

CHAPTER VI.

THE COLUMN DOWN THE GUAI RIVER, AND OTHER EVENTS IN JUNE.

THE column for the Guai district consisted of 32 officers, 451 non-commissioned officers and men, 474 horses, 4 Maxims, 16 wagons, and 192 mules. Twenty days' rations for the men were taken, and as much grain for the horses as we had. Two blankets, a waterproof sheet, and 150 rounds of ammunition per man were carried on the wagons, but no kits, each man having 50 rounds in his bandolier. The officers messed by squadrons, and 300 lbs. was allowed for the officers' kits and mess properties of each squadron. Two of the Maxim guns were on the naval carriages, and the other two loaded on wagons.

Major Watts had rejoined the corps and accompanied the column, Mr. Thomas, Native Commissioner, and Mr. Payne, Assistant Native Commissioner, acting as guides, with a small contingent of friendly natives.

Our original instructions had been to proceed

down the Khami River as far as its junction with the Guai, but owing to information we received that a large impi had collected near the latter river we moved across in that direction. This report, like many others we received subsequently, proved incorrect, and after a day or two's march it became evident that the rebels were vacating the district and were anxious to avoid anything like a serious engagement.

Our march commenced in fairly open country, but after the first fifteen or twenty miles we entered a belt of bush, which increased in density as we went on, and scouting and reconnoitring became extremely difficult.

Still it was necessary, if we were to carry out our instructions to clear the country, that we should move on a very wide front, otherwise the rebels would merely move away a mile or two into the thick bush until we had passed, and then return to the valleys and places where they had hidden their grain.

Accordingly on every day's march we had a party of about 100 men out on either flank moving parallel with the main column, and about two miles distant from it. These rejoined the columns either at the midday halt or in the evening, according to circumstances. The "friendlies" Mr. Thomas had brought were very useful in this case. They knew the country thoroughly, although their

ideas of distance were peculiar. Two or three accompanied each detached party to whom the place selected for the halt had been carefully explained, and these never failed to guide them correctly to the spot.

Our marches were necessarily regulated by the positions where a sufficient quantity of water could be obtained, but whenever possible we trekked in the morning and evening, resting in the middle of the day. This was necessary not so much on account of the heat being excessive as because our supply of grain was running short, and if our animals were to do the work it was absolutely necessary that they should have three or four hours to graze, and the days were now very short and we could not have horses or mules out after dark.

The nights were beginning to be bitterly cold, and the poor animals without rugs or covering of any kind suffered as much from that as from want of food, and began to droop and flag visibly, and we found it better both for men and horses not to start at daybreak, but to allow a couple of hours to elapse, during which horses and mules could be let out to graze and the men have breakfast.

The long line of wagons which must accompany a column is a very serious encumbrance on a march; no matter what precautions are taken, and however carefully they are watched, mishaps of some

kind or another when journeying across a veldt must occur, causing tedious and irritating delays. Whenever possible we formed our sixteen wagons up two or three abreast, and the mules seemed to work better like this; but the ground rarely opened enough to admit of this formation for any distance.

The scouts under Captain Coope and Lieutenant Taylor were always well ahead of the column. They were men who could be depended on not to lose themselves, and were in sufficient strength to be able to act independently if necessary, and they were told that their movements need not be hampered by endeavouring to keep touch with the main body. With the scouts ahead and a squadron on either flank, I had two squadrons left to accompany the column; one formed the advanced guard and escort to the leading wagons, the other the rear guard and escort to the remainder. One Maxim was in front of the leading, the other behind the rear wagon.

Mr. Thomas went ahead with the advanced guard to guide, and Mr. Payne followed with the friendlies, carrying axes and billhooks to clear the road.

The squadron furnishing the advanced guard supplied the "Cossack posts" for the day. These were posted as soon as the halting-place was reached, and no off-saddling was allowed till they were in position.

At night we formed a square laager with the sixteen wagons, four on each side, with a Maxim gun at each corner. A side was assigned to each squadron, the men sleeping with their heads on their saddles and their rifles beside them immediately behind the wagons, the horses being picketed in lines in the centre of the square, and the mules fastened to the drossel booms of the wagons. No man was allowed to remove his bandolier at night. There was no necessity to forbid them taking off any of their clothing, as they were only too anxious to keep on all they had got. Six or seven "groups" of sentries were thrown out according to the ground, each group consisting of three men, with a non-commissioned officer to every two or three groups. (See Appendix J.)

On the 7th June we came upon some recent spoor of parties of natives, and leaving the wagons we endeavoured to follow it up with a strong mounted party, but the bush soon became almost impenetrable, and we could hardly get along even in single file ; and after about half an hour's struggling, during which our clothing—already somewhat dilapidated—suffered considerably from the long thorns which impeded our progress, we had to give it up. During this Lieut. Villiers, who had gone forward with an order to the scouts, lost touch with the column and was missing. We sent back some of the

most experienced men we had to look for him, and eventually one of them came across him. We were all much relieved to see him, as to be lost in the bush after sundown with parties of the rebels prowling about was a very serious matter. There was always considerable risk in this thick bush of men detached from the column losing their way. From the nature of the work to be done flanking parties and patrols had constantly to be out, but with each party there was always sent at least one man with some experience of the veldt, who was capable of finding his way about, and no man was ever sent out alone.

Do what we would, the rebel bands, about whose proximity we received information almost daily, always seemed just ahead of us. They had clearly very good information of our movements, and left their kraals in sufficient time to baffle pursuit. The only reason they delayed so long was probably their experience of former patrols which had come from Bulawayo, who had only remained out a few days and then returned, and they were no doubt expecting daily to hear that the limit of our march had been reached and that the column had turned homewards.

It was quite clear that it was impracticable to attempt any tactical movement through the thick bush. Our opponents could move much faster than we could and would always elude any

strong force, while there was always the danger of small parties becoming isolated and cut off before they could be supported.

After two days' trekking through the thick bush, during which the scouts and detached parties had one or two skirmishes, Sergeant-Major Blatherwick being wounded by an assegai, we emerged on the 9th June into the Cheza Valley, a broad, open, and exceedingly fertile valley. The two farm-houses built, one belonging to the B.S.A. Company and the other to a Mr. Willandsen, had both been totally destroyed by the rebels.

On the 10th June we were still thirty-five miles from the junction of the Rivers Guai and Umguza, the spot appointed for our meeting with Captain McFarlane's column, and which they were expected to reach on the 11th. It seemed hardly possible they could arrive there by that date, unless they had found a road very much easier than ours, and had had altogether very different experiences; still an effort had to be made to keep the appointment on our side. So we divided the column, leaving the wagons with the Maxims and sufficient escort to make the best progress they could, and pushing on with the mounted men to the appointed place. We reached the junction of the rivers early on the 13th, and as we had anticipated found no signs of the other column.

Though the Umguza is not such a broad river as the Guai, it nearly always has running water in it, while in the Guai on the contrary there are only pools frequently long distances apart. Water, however, can always be obtained by digging in the sand of the river bed.

The next two days we had parties out in all directions hoping to get touch with McFarlane's column, but without success. Two of the scouts had rather a nasty experience. They passed, without knowing it, the junction of the rivers, which was very easy to miss in the thick bush, and trekked on, still believing the column was on their flank or ahead of them. Towards dusk they rode into a considerable force of the rebels, but by getting into the thick bush and riding round and firing shots from different points they led them to believe there was a considerable force, and no attempt was made to molest them. They were found the following day by a party sent out to look for them under Captain Coope and Mr. Thomas.

We were not sorry to rejoin our wagons, as there were sharp frosts every night, and we found it bitterly cold with only one blanket, which was all we could take on our horses.

On the 16th Mr. Thomas had information which he thought seemed really reliable, to the effect that there was a gathering of rebels at a "pan," or pool, some twenty miles to the west of the Guai,

and we determined to try to surprise them. We marched southwards in the morning for about seven miles, when we halted, and from there detached a party of 200 men (all mounted), Captain Beresford being left in charge of the remainder with instructions to await our return the following day. We started off about 2 p.m., the native guides estimating the distance at about twenty miles. However, after marching about nine miles the guides stated that they had miscalculated the distance, and that we were then within about two miles of the "pan." The sun was just setting, and we accordingly halted for the night. We formed a square round the horses, which were linked together and off-saddled, the men lying down and eating the food they had brought with them; no fires were permitted and strict silence was maintained, the men being as keen as possible and willing to carry out any instructions, as we really hoped, after our many disappointments, that we were going to have a chance this time. The country we were in was altogether different from the thick bush we had been passing through with such unvaried monotony. We were in a kind of oasis of open ground, with groups of palm trees and varied tropical foliage, in the midst of a belt of which our little force was ensconced, and when the moon rose the scene was very striking and beautiful.

It was a cold night, and we were all glad to saddle up at 4 a.m. and get moving as soon as there was sufficient light. We advanced in our usual formation of echelon from the centre with the scouts in front, but after going two or three miles it became only too evident that we were doomed to another disappointment, and that the rebels had taken to flight. We followed the spoor for some distance till pursuit became impossible owing to the bush, and then had to abandon the pursuit and return to the wagons. On our way back we came upon a kraal which had been burnt quite recently. When we rejoined our column we learnt that this had been set light to by the natives very soon after we started the previous day, and that immediately afterwards three or four other signal-fires were visible. So our movements had evidently been pretty closely watched, and timely warning of our approach given throughout the neighbourhood.

During our absence this day Captain Beresford had taken out a party and made an extended reconnaissance down the Nceza Valley, which runs between the Guai and the Umguza, and parallel to them. He returned at sunset reporting that nothing was to be found there, that all the kraals had been deserted and all the grain removed from them. He brought in twenty-seven horses he had found grazing, which were recognized as some

of those stolen from Matabele Wilsons on the 16th May. They were, however, too weak and emaciated to be got back to Bulawayo, so they were left at the Government Farm, where there was fair grazing, on our way back.

It had been intended, as we could not obtain any news of Captain McFarlane, to detach 200 men to work down the Nceza Valley during the next two days ; but after Captain Beresford's report this was given up, as it would only have entailed unnecessary work for our horses.

It was quite clear now that some untoward event had delayed the progress of the Umguza column, and as there was little more to be done in this district I decided on making the best of our way back to Khami Fort. So far we had been able to collect a fair amount of grain for our horses and mules—not, indeed, sufficient to give them regular or adequate feeds, but still enough to prevent their breaking down altogether ; but now we had the prospect of going back through the same district from which we had taken pretty well all there was to be found. There was still the Zezumbi River district untouched, and in order to procure, at any rate, enough grain to last us for our return march a party was detached to collect what they could, while the column halted for a day at the Government Farm, near where the Zezumbi River joined the Guai.

Accordingly, after an uneventful march on the 18th, a party of 100 men under Major Watts, with a Maxim and an empty wagon, was sent off on the 19th to collect what grain they could, with instructions to rejoin us at Government Farm on the 21st. They duly arrived on that evening, bringing in their wagon full of grain, and reporting that they had left a considerable quantity in the kraals.

As there was a possibility that parties of the rebels might still be lurking in the thick bush near the Khami River, we determined to strike across to that river on the 22nd, and on the 23rd a party of 100 men under Captain Bowden, with two days' rations, was detached to visit the important Inyamankhlovo kraals, near the junction of the Khami and Guai Rivers. We reached a drift over the Khami River on the 24th, and Captain Bowden's party came in that evening, having found all the kraals deserted. They had brought away what grain they could carry in their nosebags, but left a considerable quantity there untouched. Near where we halted we came upon some large military scherms (a kind of grass shed), which had apparently been occupied for some time by a large impi of three or four thousand men; they had been vacated for some two or three weeks, probably since our action on the 25th May, and it was evident that the rebels had completely evacuated the district.

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According to the orders we had received before starting we should have proceeded to Fig Tree on our return journey, but Mr. Thomas was strongly opposed to this arrangement, which would have involved the column passing through a district thickly populated with friendly Makalaka tribes. He was of opinion that our march there would be misinterpreted by them, and might possibly lead to a good many of them joining the rebels; and acting on his advice the column returned to Khami Fort.

During the latter part of our march we had had a good many cases of fever and dysentery among the men, due no doubt to the cold nights we experienced and to having to halt of necessity somewhere near the river bed. Lieutenant Villiers had a sharp attack of rheumatic fever which kept him in hospital for a month, and Private Havrons, of the York and Lancaster Regiment, Major Kershaw's servant, succumbed to an attack of dysentery. Men and horses had had a hard time of it; to ease the latter on the return march, when there was little or no chance of coming across any of the enemy, nearly all the men, except those with the advanced and rear guards or on the flanks, had marched, their horses being driven in rear of the wagons. But even with these and other precautions the hard work and want of food had told its tale, and there were many which were

not fit for further service until they had a spell of rest and feeding. Our clothing, especially our boots, was in a very dilapidated condition, and we hoped very much that supplies might have reached Bulawayo during our three weeks' absence.

The result of our operations, as I reported to General Carrington, had been disappointing and unsatisfactory in so far that no large bodies of the rebels had been encountered, only small parties of fugitives having been overtaken and chased from day to day; but, on the other hand, it could be confidently asserted that there was no fighting force left in the district south of the junction of the Guai and Umguza Rivers.

The tactics of the rebels throughout the three weeks had been to avoid not only the main column, but even the comparatively weak detached parties sent out daily to the front and flanks; and owing to the wide areas of thick, almost impenetrable, bush which abounds they had been able to do this successfully. At the same time, when the news of our return to Bulawayo became known, it was quite possible they would return to the fertile valleys they had left; and to prevent this, and also to enable the large quantities of grain we had found in the Zezumbi and Inyamankhlovo kraals, and been obliged to leave, to be collected, I recommended the establishment of a fortified post at Govern-

ment Farm, and possibly another near the junction of the Guai and the Umguza, there being suitable sites at each of these localities.

I was glad to be able to report very favourably to the General on the behaviour of the men. They had settled down wonderfully to their work, and had made very satisfactory progress in learning their various duties, while their discipline had been excellent, insubordination being practically unknown, and minor irregularities being the only offences to be dealt with. I had given very strict orders that none of the women that might be found in any of the deserted kraals were to be molested, and to the best of my belief there was not a single instance of this order being disobeyed.

When we reached Bulawayo we heard that Captain McFarlane had been most unfortunate with his transport, and that he had met with so many delays that he could not possibly have reached even the Nceza Valley till some days after we had left it. Mr. Rhodes and Captain Nicholson, who had been with this column, returned to Bulawayo the same evening, and we then had an account of their doings. Their experiences had been somewhat similar to ours; they had come upon no large bodies of the enemy, but had had several small skirmishes—the most important one occurring three

or four days after they had left, when Sergeant-Major Morrison, of the M.R.F., had distinguished himself. They had had great difficulties as regards the road, having to cut their way through some very thick bush, while their transport mules were in very bad condition, and could only do very short marches. Eventually Captain McFarlane had had to leave the wagons and push on with a mounted detachment. They came up the Nceza Valley and found a letter we had left for them there. They covered a good deal of country to the north-east of our route, but could find no Matabele, so were making their way back when Mr. Rhodes and Captain Nicholson left them.

On the 6th June, two days after we had left, Captain Spreckley's column had a most successful engagement on the Umguza, near Bulawayo. It appears that an impi had collected there, buoyed up with the assurances of a m'limo, or witch-doctor, that if the white men attempted to cross the river they would all perish. This impi was found by Sir Charles Metcalfe, who was riding into Bulawayo on the evening of the 5th June, and he reported it to General Carrington, who at once sent Lieutenant-Colonel Baden-Powell to reconnoitre; and when the latter confirmed the intelligence he sent him to direct a column under Colonel Beal, which was returning

from Belingwe direction, and which was only a few miles out of Bulawayo, towards the spot. Colonel Spreckley's column was getting ready to start for Shiloh and Inyati, and early on the morning of the 6th June he was sent to attack the impi. The two columns joined and inflicted a tremendous defeat on the rebels, who were scattered in all directions, some 300 being killed. It was the greatest loss inflicted on them in any engagement during the campaign.

However, by far the most startling intelligence which greeted us on our return was the news of the rising in Mashonaland. The Mashonas had always borne the character among those who knew the country of a peaceful, timid, and down-trodden race, incapable of any fighting at all, but in any case whose sympathies it was naturally imagined would have been with us against their oppressors and hereditary foes, the Matabele. However, there was no doubt that, whether incited by the latter or on their own initiative, they had joined the rebellion, and commenced proceedings by a series of cruel, cold-blooded murders of settlers and their families. The Imperial troops had been sent for, the Mounted Infantry, under Lieutenant-Colonel Alderson, having been despatched by sea to Beira, where they were joined by a party of Royal Engineers, under Captain Haynes, and other detachments,

who were on their way to Mauritius; while the 7th Hussars, under Colonel Paget, and detachments of Mounted Infantry from the 2nd Battalion York and Lancaster Regiment, under Captain Kekewich, and from the 2nd Battalion West Riding Regiment, under Major Rivett-Carnac, were working their way up from Mafeking by way of Macloutsie to Tuli and Victoria.

Colonel Spreckley after the engagement on the 6th June had taken a small column to Shiloh and Inyati; at the latter place the mission station had been destroyed and several white men murdered; but there were no signs of the rebels, who had retired to a group of hills called Tabasi-Mhamba, about twenty miles north of Inyati, where it was reported they had a stronghold of considerable importance. Colonel Spreckley had not sufficient force to follow them there, so after establishing small forts at Inyati and Shiloh, he returned to Bulawayo.

CHAPTER VII.

THE CAPTURE OF TABAS-I-MHAMBAMBA.

WHEN I went to see General Carrington on the 25th he informed me that he intended sending off a strong column at once to attack this stronghold at Tabas-i-Mhamba, that 400 of the M.R.F. would be wanted to go with it, and that I was to have the command of the whole force. My men, I knew, were badly in need of a rest, but that was out of the question, and the only thing was to see about supplying them with boots and other things absolutely necessary for a fresh march.

Fortunately by this time General Carrington's Staff had been reinforced by Lieut.-Colonel Bridge, as Deputy Assistant Adjutant-General, on whom fell the arduous task of reorganizing the transport and supply arrangements. It was not long before we all felt the benefit of his energy and careful management of the very limited resources available.

I explained to him our position as regards boots and other articles of clothing, and he undertook to supply what was absolutely necessary, though he could not do more. Turner had worked out our requirements as regards supplies, which we put down at twenty days, for the force. There was

plenty of meal and groceries, but very little meat—either tinned or fresh—though consignments of tinned meat were on the road from Mafeking. We hoped we might capture some cattle on the way, but I was rather doubtful about that, knowing that, as far as Inyati, we should travel by the same route as that taken by Colonel Spreckley's column, who would naturally have captured all the cattle in the district.

Colonel Bridge had in store some tins of Armour canned beef which he had rescued from the fort at Tuli, where they had been lying since the first expedition in 1890 (such a large stock having been sent up then that they could not be consumed), and had for some years been used to revet the interior of the parapets of the fort. They had been offered to Messrs. Weil, the contractors, some time before, but they refused to take them, considering they could never dare sell or issue them for food. The tins themselves were discoloured and covered with mud, but Colonel Bridge, who is an expert in these matters, had opened some and was quite confident that the bulk of the contents was quite wholesome and fit for food—and his opinion, as will be seen, proved perfectly correct. We were both, however, quite confident that their issue would not be regarded with favour by the men, and we took them only to be used in case of necessity.

The column was to consist of the two guns of No. 10 Mountain Battery, Royal Artillery, four Maxims, a detachment of the Bulawayo Field Force, Major Robertson's Cape Boy Corps, and some of Colembrander's Cape Boys, in addition to our own party of the M.R.F.

On the 26th June Major Bodle, Captain Beresford, and I, returned to Khami Fort. Lieutenant Villiers was laid up in hospital with fever, and was not likely to be fit for duty for some time. Lieutenant Moncrieffe was also down with fever, but he pluckily struggled out to join the column a few days later, though still very weak.

All the next day we were busy picking out the men and horses most fit for the march. It was desirable that all the M.R.F. contingent should be mounted, and we eventually made up the numbers as follows:—

A Squadron	. 90	Scouts	. . 33
B „	. 19	Maxims	. . 31
C „	. 68	Signallers	. . 8
D „	. 67	Medical	. . 5
E „	. 79		

On Sunday, June 28th, Major-General Sir F. Carrington, K.C.M.G., accompanied by Captain Hon. F. de Moleyns as *aide-de-camp*, came out to Khami and inspected the corps. The men in their tattered clothing could not be called smart, but they presented a decidedly workmanlike appearance and

looked fit and well, and the General, who had had many previous experiences of irregular corps, delighted them by expressing his approval of what he saw, and of the work they had done.

He then told me that in view of the importance of keeping the lines of communication to Mashonaland open he had sent Captain Hon. C. White to Victoria and Charter, with a small detachment of the Bulawayo Field Force, and that he proposed sending a further contingent of 100 dismounted men of the M.R.F., under an Imperial officer, to follow the same route, establish small posts where necessary, and keep the roads open for supplies, etc., and he wished to appoint Major Watts to the command of this force.

I was very sorry to lose Major Watts' services; he had worked very hard from the commencement, and had always given me the greatest possible assistance. However, an able officer was clearly required for this new duty, as any failure to keep open the road to Mashonaland would have seriously embarrassed the force there, and have considerably added to the difficulties of the troops. It was accordingly arranged that Major Watts should remain at Khami, and get the new detachment in readiness to start whenever he received instructions.

After the General had left I communicated the news to the men that probably 100 would be required almost immediately for service in Mashonaland.

Many were very sore and disappointed at not being included in the Tabas-i-Mhamba force, and were not looking forward to a spell of duty in the fort while their comrades were fighting, and they were much pleased at this fresh prospect of participating in active operations.

They started as a matter of fact two or three days after we did, and we did not see them again during the campaign.

The Tabas-i-Mhamba contingent left the fort that evening and marched as far as Matabele Wilsons, where they halted for the night. We only took wagons for the blankets and ammunition, all our supplies being loaded on wagons in Bulawayo. We were anxious not to halt in the town, so the following morning (29th) we marched through Bulawayo to the left bank of the Umguza River, six miles on the Gwelo road, where we halted and awaited the Bulawayo contingent of the column. These arrived that evening, and the force was then composed as under:—

Matabeleland Relief Force (mounted),	
with 4 Maxims	400
Detachment R.A., with two 2·5-inch	
guns—	
Whites	36
Natives	30
Under Lieutenant McCulloch, R.A.,	
and Lieutenant N. Fraser, West	
Riding Regiment.	

Bulawayo Field Force, under Captain Howard Brown—	
Mounted (under Captain Southey and Lieutenant Crewe)	25
Dismounted (under Lieut. Boggie)	75
Colembrander's Native Contingent .	79
Major Robertson's Cape Boys . .	107
Total	752

With 480 horses, 280 mules, 22 wagons.

We were delighted at having the two mountain guns with us, and they fully justified our expectations. In addition to the two officers, eleven non-commissioned officers and men, thirty muleteers, and forty mules, belonging to No. 10 Mountain Battery, Natal, had come up, and these were supplemented by twenty-three volunteers from the B.F.F., who had had some previous knowledge of gunnery, and whom Lieutenant McCulloch had been drilling steadily since his arrival. The mules had stood the march up wonderfully, and were in excellent condition. Each gun and carriage was carried by five mules, with a similar number for reliefs. The remainder carried ammunition and tools, there being sixty shrapnel shell, twenty-four ring shell, sixteen case shot taken for each gun, or a total of 200 rounds of ammunition for the section.

We had had a detachment of Colembrander's

Corps with us in our actions of the 25th May, but we had not seen Major Robertson's Corps before. They certainly turned out and marched well, and had evidently been carefully drilled and instructed. They were provided with bayonets for their rifles, but had no scabbards or belts for them, and the bayonets consequently had always to be fixed on the rifles, the effect being decidedly peculiar.

The instructions which I received from General Carrington that morning were to the effect that the column was to proceed to Tabas-i-Mhamba, a group of koppies about eighteen miles north-east of Inyati, on the Hartly Hill road, where, according to intelligence which had been received from Mr. Gilgund, the Native Commissioner at Inyati, who was to join us there, the rebels had assembled in considerable force, and where it was believed they had collected a large number of cattle and supplies. The ground had been partially reconnoitred by Mr. Gilgund and Lieutenant Bankes-Wright, the officer commanding the fort at Inyati, and the famous native scout, Jan Grootboom, had been sent on to get further information, and was to report himself to me at Inyati.

The probable line of retreat for the rebels would be northwards by the Shangani River and the thick bush to Inyorki, and the General considered the best plan of action would be to send mounted men

rapidly round to the north and east side of the position, while the main attack moved on the place from the north and worked southwards. Moreover, as success more or less depended on the rebels being surprised, it would probably be found necessary to march by night from Inyati.

Captain Vyvyan was attached to the column as Intelligence Officer, and he was assisted by Captain Hon. F. de Moleyns; Captain Windley, of the Bulawayo Field Force, who was acquainted with the koppies, being appointed guide.

The General impressed on us that any natives who wished to surrender should be given every opportunity of doing so, and I republished to the column the general order he had issued on the 16th June, which was as follows:—

“It is to be distinctly understood by all ranks that during the continuation of operations, clemency is to be shown to the wounded, women and children are not to be injured, and prisoners are to be taken on all possible occasions.”

We had two ambulance wagons with us—one in charge of Dr. Michell, of the M.R.F., and the other under Dr. Redpath, M.R.C.S., one of the two surgeons sent out by the Red Cross Society. Lieutenant Oatley was appointed Transport Officer, and Lieutenant Heyman Quartermaster to the column, and Lieutenant Lees took Lieutenant Villiers' place as orderly officer.

We marched the next morning, about eight a.m., following the Gwelo road as far as the post station beyond Tabas Induna, and then turned off by the road to Davey's Farm, forming laager near there on the left bank of the Kokwe River, after a short trek of about eight miles.

By this time we had all acquired a good deal of experience in laagering, packing wagons, and all the details incidental to a campaign on the veldt. The men were thoroughly accustomed to the daily routine, and fell readily into their places. I always assembled all the officers in the morning before a start was made, and explained to them all what the day's work was to be, and the positions and duties assigned to each unit. Captain Beresford took charge of the advanced party of the column on the march, and was responsible for the posting of the outposts both by day and night, Major Bodle and Captain Turner superintending the formation of the laager and the positions to be occupied by each unit. They rode on ahead with the advanced guard when within a mile or two of the halting-place, together with orderly sergeants and markers from each unit. When the site for the laager had been selected, and the markers posted, the orderly sergeants pointed out their position to each commander. Squadrons and detachments formed up in front and 100 yards clear of the positions assigned to them, and dismounted or

K

sat down till the wagons came up; but no off-saddling or falling-out was permitted till the laager was formed, and all the Cossack posts were in their positions. Each unit occupied the same position in the laager during the march, and each driver knew the place his wagon should take both in the order of march and in the laager. (See Appendix K.)

The Right Hon. C. J. Rhodes, Colonel F. Rhodes, D.S.O., and Mr. Weston Jarvis joined the column in the evening. They had their own wagon and mess with them, and did not draw on us for anything in the shape of transport or supplies, but while quite independent in that way they conformed in every way to the arrangements of the march, and took up any position at the halting-places that was pointed out to them. We also received an important recruit in the person of Father Bartlémy, who henceforward remained with the column until the close of the campaign. He endeared himself to us all by his kindly, simple manners, and won our admiration and affection by his untiring devotion to the sick and wounded.

The next day the column did a march of about ten miles to Mr. Arthur Rhodes' Farm on the Bembezi River, which we reached at one p.m. We had had a cold south-east wind and overcast sky at sunrise, and though the weather became brighter later it remained cold all day.

Mr. A. Rhodes' farmhouse had, as we knew,

been burnt and looted, but there was excellent grazing, which our poor horses much appreciated. As I had feared, there were no signs of any cattle in the neighbourhood, and as none came out from Bulawayo the ones Colonel Bridge had hoped to send after us were evidently not procurable. The stock of tinned meat was very low, and the next day, failing the capture of fresh meat, there would be nothing for it but the issue of the doubtful tins from Tuli Fort.

The next day, the 2nd July, we marched about 11 miles, to the junction of the Bembezi and Manzimyhama Rivers, where we halted. The road had been good, but we finished up with a rather bad drift, which took our wagons some time to get across. We issued the Tuli tins of beef for rations this day, which, as I expected, were immediately rejected by the men as unfit for food. I assembled all the officers commanding units, and in their presence Captain Turner, Captain Howard Brown, and I opened over 200 tins, and in only about 15 per cent. of these was there any possible ground for complaint. The men were perfectly satisfied, and we all ate the contents, which were quite wholesome, and had not deteriorated in the slightest.

I heard that we might have some difficulty in crossing the Bembezi River, so sent on Captain Coope and some scouts to reconnoitre. They

found a drift about four miles down the river, which would take about an hour to put in order for wagons. The next morning accordingly Major Robertson's Cape Boys were sent on at 7 a.m., an hour ahead of the column, to prepare the road and drift. There was a little delay at the drift, but no mishap occurred, and, after crossing, the column moved down the right bank of the river, and came into the Inyati road about two miles further on. Inyati was reached at 2 p.m. after a hot march, though the road was fairly good all the way—we had done about 12 miles. We found the river, the Ingenqueese, a running stream, the water being good and plentiful.

Mr. Rhodes' wagon unfortunately broke down at a small drift at the commencement of the march. However one of our wagons, which had been loaded with grain, had become nearly empty, so I was able to send it back and place it at his disposal.

Jan Grootboom, who had been sent to reconnoitre Tabas-i-Mhamba, met the column at Inyati. He reported that he left the district in the early morning of the 1st July, having been unable to penetrate it owing to the number of people scattered throughout it. He went round the eastern side and saw many fires, and also several spoor leading out of the koppies to the north and east. He was of opinion that men were going in and out, and said that scouts were

watching the country as far down as Inyati, and keeping a look-out from Tabas-i-Mhamba, and he considered that the largest number would probably be found at the north-east end and on the south-east ridge of koppies, there being good water near both places.

Early next morning, after consulting Captain Windley and Mr. Gilgund, the following orders were issued for the march to and attack on Tabas-i-Mhamba, the general plan being, as suggested by General Carrington, to attack the position in such a manner as to prevent, if possible, the escape of the rebels into the thick bush to the north and north-east :—

All dismounted men (numbering 334, including the Inyati garrison), with the detachment of No. 10 Mountain Battery R.A. (2 guns), and one Maxim gun, were to march at 3 p.m., under command of Major Kershaw, to the Longwe River, about 12 miles distant, and halt there for the mounted portion of the force (numbering 398, with one Maxim), who were to start at 5.30 p.m. From the Longwe River the whole force was to move together to West's Store, about five miles further on, where two squadrons (130 men) and 26 dismounted men of the M.R.F. and Colembrander's Cape Boys (73), were to halt, while the remainder of the force was moved on to the north end of Tabas-i-Mhamba, the general plan of

operations being, after having by the night march cut off the enemy's retreat from the thick bush to the north and west, to drive him with the infantry of the northern column through the koppies, from north to south, into the open country to the south and east, where the mounted troops would take up the pursuit, the duties of the southern column being similarly to clear the southern section of the koppies, driving the enemy eastward, and subsequently join the northern column.

The northern force would advance as soon as it was light, about 5.30 a.m., but the southern force was not to deliver its attack till 6 a.m.

The dismounted men took 70 rounds of ammunition, the mounted 100, the latter taking blankets and cloaks, the carriage of which, in the case of dismounted units, was left to the discretion of officers commanding. All carried one day's rations with them.

Six wagons, including two hospital wagons, with an escort of 40 men and one Maxim, were to march at 2 a.m. on the 5th July to West's Store, carrying two days' rations and 50 rounds of reserve ammunition and blankets. It was considered that these would reach the scene of action about 8 a.m. The remaining wagons were parked at the fort at Inyati, and left with a guard of 53 men under the command of Lieutenant Macgeean.

There would be a moon till about 1 a.m., and it was calculated that it would have gone down before the column approached Tabas-i-Mhamba, and that the force would reach the positions assigned to them about 2 a.m. and 3 a.m. respectively. Most stringent orders were given enjoining perfect silence and prohibiting smoking or lights of any description.

The several parties moved off at the hours fixed, Major Kershaw arriving at the Longwe River at 8.30 p.m., and the mounted troops at 10.15 p.m. The march was resumed at 10.45 p.m., and West's Store was reached at 2 a.m. and the north end of the koppies at 3.15 a.m., the night march having been carried out very creditably by all ranks. The column passed very close to the fires of the rebels, indeed within 150 yards of them, but no alarm was raised.

The northern column advanced at 5.30 a.m., the infantry, preceded by scouts, moving into the koppies, while the mounted men moved round the northern side to the open ground and the Umsangwe River on the east. The enemy were not discovered in any force till 6.45 a.m., when the scouts came upon a considerable number near some scherms. They were evidently surprised, and were driven from their position—one of some strength—without much difficulty. They, however, retired into some koppies overlooking the

river, where they made a protracted stand. The position was of great natural strength, the koppies being high, difficult of access, and honeycombed with caves from which the rebels kept up a continuous and fairly accurate fire. The guns came into action against them, but could make very little impression. One koppie was taken by the B.F.F. about 9 a.m., and at 10 a.m. the main one was stormed by the Cape Boys under Major Robertson, supported by about forty men of the B.F.F. The Cape Boys attacked and carried the position in a very determined and gallant manner in the face of a hot fire, killing a number of the enemy and driving the remainder from the koppies. During the next hour a lot of desultory fighting took place, and it was not till 12 noon that the koppies were practically cleared. During the fighting about 300 cattle had fallen into our hands.

The mounted detachments had meanwhile moved round the flanks. A Squadron, under Captain Bowden, in the first instance went along the western side of the koppies, where they surprised a party of the enemy, whom they dispersed, and then worked round the northern extremity and became engaged with parties of the enemy in some koppies, killing a number and losing themselves one man killed and two wounded; they subsequently joined Captain Drury's squadron, which started by

the north-east flank, and also surprised a party of the rebels, killing several and capturing about 300 cattle without any casualties among themselves. The two squadrons eventually joined me shortly after 12 noon.

The southern column advanced at 6 a.m., and Colembrander's Cape Boys charged and cleared one of the southern koppies held by the enemy; while the mounted portion, moving round the southern side, cut off a number of stragglers. The column worked through all the southern section of koppies, but the enemy made no stand on this side, and Major Kershaw joined me with his mounted troops about 11.45 a.m. They also had captured a number of sheep and cattle.

Captain Coope and the scouts had, as soon as the koppies were cleared, moved round to the open ground on the east of the position to try to hit off the spoor of any party of the enemy; but the fugitives had apparently scattered in all directions, and our horses were too exhausted to be capable of any extended pursuit.

The fighting had consisted of a number of more or less independent actions, the greater part of the work falling to the lot of the dismounted men, all of whom carried out their duties most creditably, the Cape Boys especially distinguishing themselves in carrying the final position. The rebels fought

stubbornly throughout, far better than those we had defeated on the 25th May, and in many cases their shooting was very good. It is difficult to estimate either their numbers or their losses, as the fighting took place over such a wide area. Those engaged belonged chiefly to the Induba regiment, two indunas of which were reported as killed. Their losses must have amounted to nearly 100. Nearly 1000 cattle, over 2000 sheep and goats, and between 500 and 600 women and children were captured, amongst them being one of Lobengula's queens. They were quite willing to be taken with the column, and expressed themselves as heartily sick of all the fighting and moving about they had been going through. They said that picked scouts had watched and reported the arrival of the column at Inyati, but that the indunas had calculated that the force would march on the 5th and attack on the 6th, by which time the women and cattle would have been removed. Evidently the night march of twenty miles had upset all their plans, and had been mainly instrumental to the success of the operations. Our casualties were :—

Whites: three killed, viz., Troopers Thomas C. Langton, M.R.F., and O'Reilly, B.F.F., and Corporal James Pringle, M.R.F.; and five wounded, viz., Troopers John H. Hill, George Meyer, David Cooper, George Dunn, Arthur Dupreez—all of the M.R.F. Trooper Hill died the next day.

Cape Boys: six killed and nine wounded.

Hill and Pringle were buried near West's Store; Langton, O'Reilly, and the Cape Boys close to where they fell. There were eleven horses killed and four wounded.

The wounded were looked after with assiduous care and attention by Drs. Michell and Redpath, assisted by Father Bartlémy.

Our wagons had duly reached West's Store between 8 a.m. and 9 a.m., and we decided to laager there for the night. I sent back word for a hospital wagon to be sent on towards us to meet the wounded, but the ground was so rough and difficult it could not come far, and they had to be carried all the way. This took a long time, as did the herding of all the captured cattle, and it was dark before they were all collected on a patch of open ground near the Store.

On our way through the koppies we had an opportunity of examining the position we had captured, which is accurately described by Captain Vyvyan as follows :—

The group of koppies forms roughly an equilateral triangle of about three and a half miles sides, the apex towards the north-east where the road approaches the Umsangwe, and the base running south-east from West's Store towards the river. The northern side rises abruptly close to the road in a chain of koppies, composed of

enormous granite boulders, with scanty bush and trees growing among them, and presents only three or four openings accessible to horses, the principal passes being at the two extreme ends. There is also a pass through the centre. The base or south-west side is also abrupt at the end near West's Store, but diminishes in height towards the river, the ridge ending in a few small isolated koppies. On the southern side the ground falls more gradually towards the river, but is much broken up by dongas.

The interior is a confused mass of koppies, with grassy hollows scattered among them, where a certain amount of pasture for cattle is obtainable. All these koppies are full of caves and shelters formed among the interstices of the boulders, and capable of containing many thousand people, some of the caves being estimated as sufficient for one hundred persons. Those occupied were principally in the koppie opposite West's Store, where a considerable amount of plundered property was found, and in the cliffs overhanging the Umsangwe at the north-east end, where the river runs through a deep narrow gorge. This was probably due to the two localities named being near a good water supply. Scherms were found in considerable quantities near both places, those at West's Store being at the foot of the koppies and close to the road. A new kraal was also being constructed near this point.

The koppie pointed out as Mamba's stronghold is on the eastern side of the entrance to a valley near the apex of the triangle ; the passage is not more than seventy yards wide, and is completely dominated by precipitous rocks on either side. Passing through the gorge the path enters a circular grassy meadow, enclosed by koppies and about 700 yards in diameter, which would appear to afford good pasturage. At the further end of this valley the track leads towards the deep gorge mentioned above, which is overhung by the Uwungu koppies on the right bank of the river, and the stronghold captured by Major Robertson's Cape Boys, both full of large caves. Most of the cattle captured were found in this valley and just outside it; one of the caves in the gorge behind West's Store was, it is believed, the residence of a m'limo, or witch-doctor, being arranged so that the oracles could speak through a crevice in the rocks to the indunas assembled in the cave; and it was in the adjoining caves that most of the looted property was discovered. The whole position is one of vast natural strength, and capable of a protracted defence. The cover afforded by the caves and boulders gives a great advantage to the defenders, as fire under such conditions is very difficult to reply to.

The night passed quietly, but it required a considerable number of men to guard all the

women and children and captured cattle, and I accordingly sent off the latter on the road back to Inyati the following morning, escorted by Major Robertson's Cape Boys and A Squadron of the M.R.F.

Mr. Rhodes was much pleased with the success of the engagement. He, with his brother and Mr. Weston Jarvis, had accompanied the mounted squadron under Captain Drury, and at one time had come under a pretty warm fire shortly after they had been joined by Captain Bowden, when poor Langton was killed. I consulted him as to the disposal of the women and children, who were likely to prove a rather serious encumbrance, and as their presence in Bulawayo, owing to the difficulty of feeding them, would be an embarrassment, he suggested their being taken to Inyati and Mr. Fynn's farm, near the Bembezi, where they could be fed and employed tilling the ground.

On the 6th all the mounted men and Colembrander's Cape Boys, who had had the least marching the previous day, were employed in searching the position and the neighbourhood for traces of the fugitives and for cattle and grain; and as we found the water supply at West's Store very bad we moved the laager to a point a mile nearer Inyati, on the left bank of the Solongo stream, where water was obtained in sufficient quantities from the sand.

No natives were found in Tabas-i-Mhamba or anywhere in the vicinity. The mounted troops came upon the spoor of a considerable number leading to the south-east, and it is imagined that the bulk of the fugitives made their way into the eastern section of the Matoppo Hills. The women reported that an impi had left some days before for the Shangani. No more cattle and only a few more sheep and goats were brought in, and no grain was found by the patrols, but the women collected a little.

Large quantities of loot from various localities were found in the caves, including clothing of Dr. and Mrs. Langford, a theodolite of Mr. Edwards' or Mr. Fitzpatrick's, two handkerchiefs marked "H. E. Burnard," halves of 249 five-pound notes, letters, blankets, old uniforms, cotton goods, clothing, hats, besides wagons and carts, including a buggy, believed to have been the property of Mr. Pascoe Grenfell. The whole place seems to have been utilized as a central depôt for loot obtained from murdered settlers.

Stone breastworks were found in some places among the koppies, some of old and some of recent date, but none were occupied during the action.

No information could be obtained regarding the white men supposed to have been murdered at West's Store, but the skull of a European was

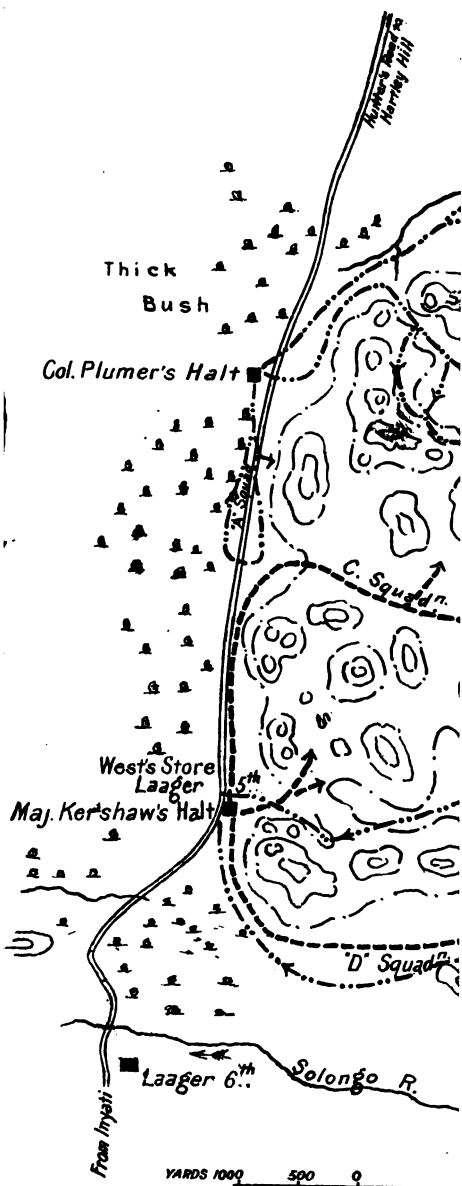
found near the laager on the left banks of the stream. No other remains were found.

General Carrington was anxious that we should return as soon as the Tabas-i-Mhamba district had been thoroughly cleared out. So the following day (the 7th) the column marched into Inyati (sixteen miles), the wounded all bearing the journey very well. We found the cattle and sheep had already arrived and were kraaled near the fort, and we handed over twenty-five cattle and 100 sheep to the Inyati garrison for their use.

The next day we had to halt at Inyati, as we had not been able to obtain grain for our horses and mules, and it was absolutely necessary to give them a day's rest to graze. We, however, started off the sheep and cattle in the afternoon with a strong escort under Major Kershaw.

We left at Inyati 150 of the women and children who belonged to that district, under charge of Mr. Gilgund, Native Commissioner, the remainder being taken on to Mr. Fynn's farm, on the Bembezi, where they were left under a guard of Cape Boys. We left behind, too, at Inyati, in charge of Dr. Redpath, Trooper Meyer, M.R.F., and two Cape Boys, who had been seriously wounded, and to whom a few days' rest would be of immense benefit. As soon as he heard of the engagement General Carrington sent us out more ambulance wagons, and these met us on the 9th, and were of great assistance.

Action at
THABAS-I-MAMBA,
5th July.



We marched back by the same way as we came, reaching the Umguza River on the 12th. Mr. Rhodes here left the column and returned to Bulawayo, as did Captains Vyvyan and de Moleyns, of the Headquarter Staff. They had both been of great assistance, especially Captain Vyvyan, who had compiled all the diary as well as the topographical notes of the district.

We were all pleased at receiving congratulatory messages from General Carrington, Lord Grey, and the High Commissioner. The instructions we received were to move to Usher's Farm, about ten miles south of Bulawayo, preparatory to operations in the Matoppo Hills, and we accordingly marched there on the 13th. Colembrander's Boys accompanied us, but the Bulawayo Field Force detachment went into Bulawayo preparatory to disbandment. Several of the cattle had succumbed to rinderpest on the march back; but Major Kershaw, after detaching 150 cattle and 200 sheep for our use at Usher's Farm, handed over to Colonel Bridge 530 cattle and 1280 sheep and goats for consumption in Bulawayo.

CHAPTER VIII.

THE OPERATIONS IN THE MATOPPOS IN JULY.

DURING our fourteen days' absence no very important event had occurred. Captain White's small party had made a wonderfully rapid and successful march to Charter, and as has been mentioned Major Watts' detachment had followed in support. The rising in Mashonaland was apparently spreading, and the troops under Colonel Alderson were being rapidly pushed up to Salisbury.

The High Commissioner had issued a proclamation offering pardon to all Matabele who would now come in and surrender, except those who had been implicated in the murders and outrages committed, and certain indunas whose names were given in a list appended to the proclamation.

There were certainly indications that the majority of the natives were tired of fighting, and would be only too glad to surrender if they

had the opportunity; but it was feared that as the list of proclaimed indunas included nearly all the prominent rebel leaders, there was but little chance of the offer of pardon ever reaching the ears of those for whom it was intended, and that, even if it did, the chiefs would so work on their fears that few would venture to dissociate themselves from those who had incited them to rebel in the first instance.

General Carrington had determined on the disbandment of the Bulawayo Field Force. They had done excellent service from the time of their embodiment at the commencement of the rising; but now that the neighbourhood of the town had been cleared of the rebels, and operations which might be of a protracted nature had to be commenced in the Matoppo Hills, and at the same time forts constructed in other parts of the country, it was desirable that, until the permanent police were formed, a force should be enrolled with some more definite conditions of service. Captain Nicholson had accepted the command of the new police in Matabeleland, and to him was entrusted the raising of the temporary force, the conditions being a period of service of three months, with the option of this being extended a further term of three months should their services be required for the longer period. The pay was at first fixed at 5s. a day for troopers,

but this was subsequently raised to 7s. 6d., the same as given to the men of the M.R.F., the Bulawayo Field Force having received 10s. a day. About 200 men joined this new force.

At this time, too, a Medical Corps was established in Bulawayo, to which were appointed all the doctors and hospital orderlies serving with the different units, under Dr. Strong as Principal Medical Officer. Dr. Michell, though duly appointed a Surgeon-Captain in the new corps, remained with the M.R.F. till its disbandment, and our orderlies were, as far as possible, left with us. It was, however, very desirable of course that there should be a central authority responsible direct to the general officer commanding for the proper distribution of medical officers and their assistants, and for all the details connected with the care of the sick and wounded.

Our new camp was about six miles from the northern edge of the Matoppo Hills, on one of the two or three farms owned by a Mr. Usher. It was clear that the only organized force of the rebels we had to contend with in Matabeleland was located in these hills, and General Carrington determined to lose no time in attacking them with all the force he could collect. Lieut.-Colonel Baden-Powell had been making several reconnaissances of the hills, assisted by Lieutenant Pyke, from Hope Fountain,

and had gained some very valuable information, both as to the possible entrance into the hills and also as to the location of the different indunas and their impis. He prepared the attached valuable and interesting sketch, showing the result of his investigations.

From the 14th to the 16th we were busy refitting as far as we could—replenishing stores, ammunition, etc. We brought in all the men we could from Khami, leaving only a garrison of fifty men in the fort there.

Our Maxim guns so far had hardly come into action, and in the country we should be operating in in future it would be impossible to take any kind of wheeled vehicle; so Captain Wheeler arranged for two of the guns being carried on mules, selecting nine of the transport animals for this purpose.

Four mules were told off for each gun, one carrying a gun-saddle, with gun and tripod and two boxes of ammunition; and another a prospector's saddle, fitted with two leather boxes, and taking four boxes of ammunition—or 600 rounds in all—the other two mules being spare. The ninth mule carried a saddle fitted to take eight boxes, or 1200 rounds of spare ammunition. The weight of the gun-saddle as fitted up was, roughly, 86 lbs., and of the ammunition-saddle 50 lbs., the gun itself weighing 54 lbs. and the tripod

60 lbs., while the ammunition-boxes, filled, weighed 15 lbs.

On the 16th all available officers went out to make a reconnaissance of part of the Matoppo Hills, not so much with a view of discovering the exact whereabouts of the rebel impis, as to give us all an opportunity of examining the koppies, and ascertaining the character of the country we should have to operate in. We were all much impressed with what we saw, and the difficulties of the task before us, if the rebels were handled with sufficient skill to avail themselves of all the advantages which their occupation of such a territory could give them. We climbed up one of the highest koppies we came upon, and though no very extensive view was possible, there lay before us an apparently endless sea of koppies of various sizes, all more or less composed of huge granite boulders, in the interstices of which grew bush and scrub, and separated from each other in most cases by only extremely narrow and tortuous gorges.

Here and there were bare, smooth, dome-shaped hills, and one or two broader valleys through which horses or cattle could be brought, but these were few and far between. These hills, which run in a general direction from north-east to south-west, extend for a length of nearly sixty miles, their breadth varying considerably, but

being in some parts as much as fifteen or even twenty miles. It was quite clear that if the rebels wished to avoid fighting they would have very little difficulty in doing so in such a country, and that the only way to force them to an engagement would be to discover and make for the whereabouts of their women and cattle, the latter of whom, at any rate, they would not be able to move very quickly; further, it was evident that any combined operations by different columns or detached parties would be extremely difficult, and that subordinate officers must keep their men well together and in hand when advancing from koppie to koppie, and reconnoitre the ground very carefully before each advance.

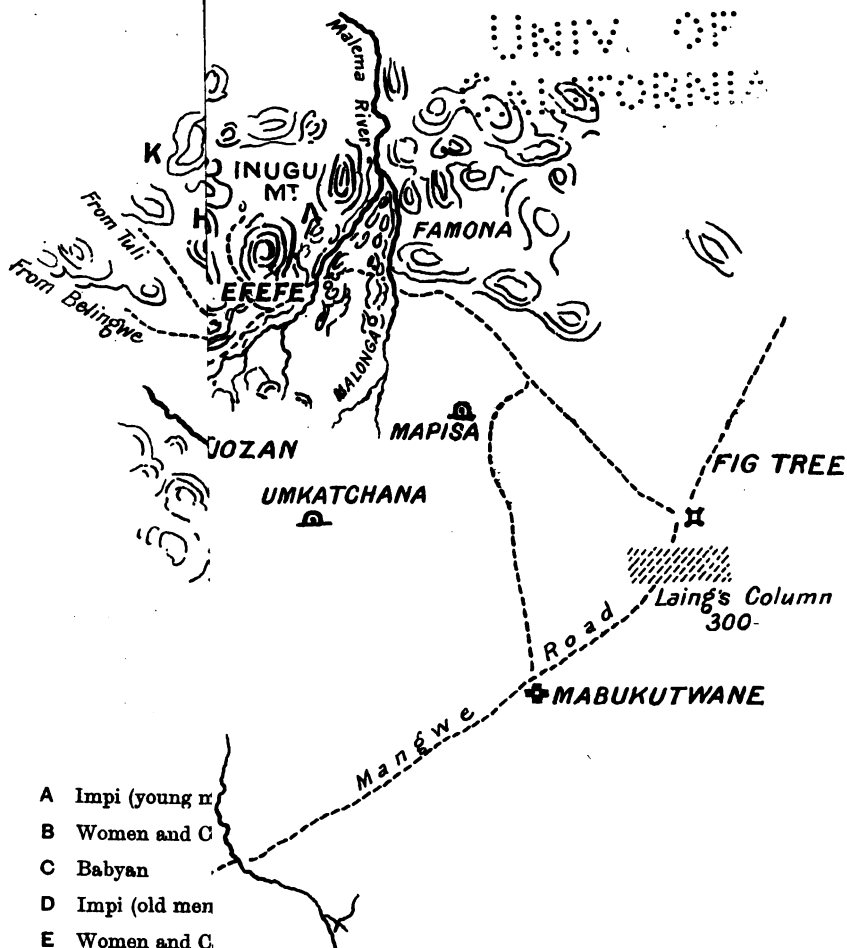
General Carrington and his Staff arrived in camp on the afternoon of the 17th, and he assumed command of the column, which had been strengthened by the arrival of a detachment of the new Bulawayo Force, under Captain Nicholson, and a large contingent of about 300 Friendlies, under Mr. Taylor, Chief Native Commissioner.

The General did not consider our camp sufficiently near the Matoppos to be a base from which an attack on the hills could be delivered, so on the 18th we moved to a new site, about five miles further south, called Usher's No. 2, in a valley just on the outskirts of the Matoppos. In the evening we were joined by Lord Grey,

Mr. Rhodes, Colonel Rhodes, Captain the Hon. A. Lawley, and others, who had come out to the camp from Bulawayo in the hope of participating in the engagement we expected to have with the rebels within the next two days.

There had been some days before a rumour in Bulawayo that the rebels intended to make an attack on the fort at Fig Tree, and Captain Laing, who had recently arrived in Bulawayo in command of a contingent known as the Belingwe Field Force, composed of men raised in that district, was sent off there at once. The report, like many others, proved incorrect; but General Carrington considered that from Fig Tree the Belingwe Force could make a diversion and co-operate with us in our attack on the rebels.

The information which Colonel Baden-Powell had collected was to the effect that in the western section of the hills, which was to be dealt with first, there was an important impi, under the chief Babyan, in a group of koppies some five or six miles south-west of our new camp, which was in communication with and supported by other parties, under Hliso and Mholi (the husband of Famona, the daughter of Lobengula) and other indunas, who were located further west, near the Inugu Mountain. It was against these latter that Captain Laing's efforts were to be directed, while the main column attacked Babyan's men. The



R. S. Baden-Powell, Lt.-Col.,

Chief Staff Officer.

Buluwayo,

17th July, '97

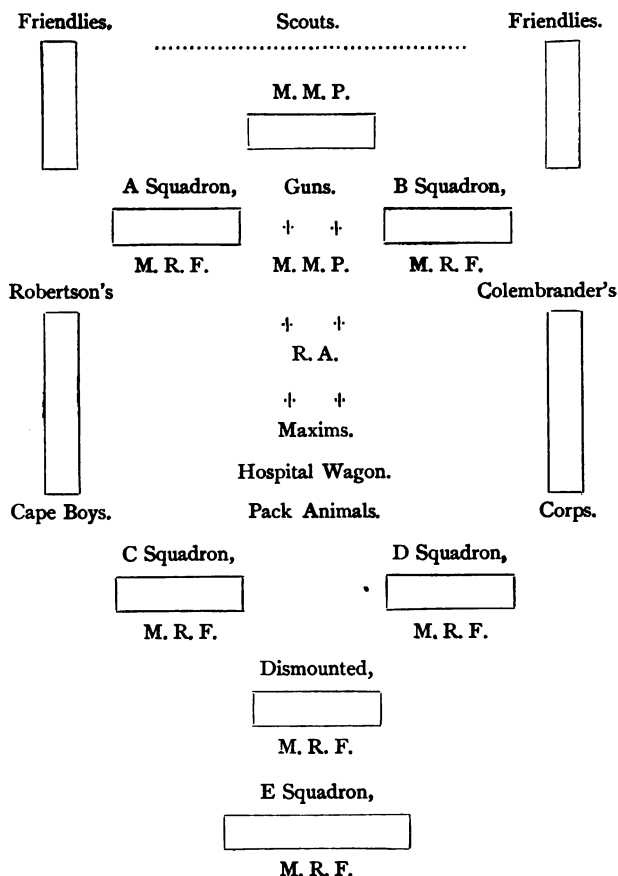
General's intention was to advance by night and in the early morning, so as to get as close as possible to the position held by the rebels by dawn.

On the 19th a reconnoitring party was sent out under Captain Coope to try to ascertain the exact whereabouts of the enemy, and also see if there were any signs of Captain Laing. This party, which consisted of Captain de Moleyns, Lieutenant Lowther, and four scouts, with about thirty natives under Mr. Purser, went up the Chilili Valley without coming across any natives. On ascending some hills beyond, however, they were attacked by a body of natives, who tried to cut them off from their line of retreat down the valley, and it was only by the coolness and pluck of the three officers that the whole party, including the Friendlies, were extricated and got safely back to camp.

On the 19th a garrison, consisting of seventy men with two 7-pr. guns and two Maxims, under Captain Southey and Lieutenant Constable, was left in camp, and at 10 p.m. the remainder of the column, composed as under :—

R.A.	.	.	.	.	.	33
M.M.P.	.	.	.	.	.	72
M.R.F.	.	.	.	.	.	380
Robertson's Cape Boys	.	.	.	.	.	162
Colebrander's Corps	.	.	.	.	.	103
Belingwe Force	.	.	.	.	.	40
Medical Corps	.	.	.	.	.	10

with two 2·5-in. guns, three Maxims, and one Hotchkiss, and accompanied by 300 Friendlies, marched in the following formation :—



The only mounted troops were the scouts, a troop of the M.M.P., and E Squadron of the M.R.F., these taking 100 rounds of ammunition per man, while the dismounted men took 50. Each man carried a day's rations with him. Twelve pack animals accompanied the column with ammunition, of which eleven carried Martini - Henry and one Lee - Metford, the M.M.P. being the only troops armed with the latter weapon.

Drs. Sutcliffe and Michell accompanied the column with an ambulance wagon and ten stretchers, carried by forty Friendlies.

The ground we had to pass over for the first four or five miles was open veldt, and the column marched quietly till 1 a.m., when we halted, the units from their order of march dropping at once into a square without any confusion. We rested till about 4.30 a.m., when we resumed the march, and a mile or so further on approached the entrance to the valley forming the stronghold. Here we established the field hospital and left the pack animals with a guard of fifty men, the mounted squadron, and a Maxim. The valley down which we now marched is about two miles long, fairly broad, but narrowing at points, commanded on both sides by precipitous hills, and full of koppies. The enemy were first seen in some scherms

high up on the eastern slopes. They were soon dislodged from there by a few shells, and then retired into a dense mass of koppies at the south-east end of the valley, east of the Tuli River, which runs out of this corner of the valley southward.

The stronghold itself consisted of an intricate labyrinth of caves and boulders, strengthened with scherms; the latter were set on fire by some of the Friendlies, and no sooner was this done than a tremendous fusillade was heard and the Friendlies fell back, having two wounded. The Cape Boys under Major Robertson, and Colembrander's Corps under Captain Colembrander, supported by two Maxims under Captain Wheeler, and the Hotchkiss under Captain Llewellyn, the whole under the command of Lieutenant-Colonel Baden-Powell, then attacked the position. The rebels fought obstinately (the Cape Boys losing two killed and six wounded in a few minutes), but were gradually driven out or killed.

Meanwhile the scouts and the mounted troop of the M.M.P. under Captain Warwick went forward to try to find a way round the other side of the koppies so that the retreat of the rebels might be cut off, and Colonel Bridge, Captain Vyvyan, and Colonel Rhodes went with this party. They were, however, brought

up short by a very narrow gorge, through which they could only pass in single file and at a walk. Here they came under a hot fire from the rebels, one man, Sergeant Warringham, M.M.P., being mortally, and Lieutenant Taylor, of the scouts, slightly wounded, while Colonel Rhodes had his horse shot under him.

It was some time before the koppies were cleared, desultory fighting going on for some hours; and even after the advanced party had reassembled they had to wait some time before stretchers for the wounded could be got down to them, the Friendlies who had charge of them having dropped them and bolted. However, about 2 p.m. the rebels had disappeared, creeping away through the various ravines, and the different detachments were then assembled, the wounded brought in, and the whole force marched back to camp.

Our casualties had been: Sergeant Warringham killed, Lieutenant Taylor wounded, four Cape Boys killed and ten wounded.

It is impossible to say what losses the enemy sustained, but they had certainly received a severe lesson, having been driven from their stronghold and their kraals burnt.

On the way back Lieutenant Lowther, of the scouts, was sent on to bring up another hospital wagon; but when we reached camp we found

he had not been there, and as he did not turn up that night we were very anxious about him. It was not till the following evening that we heard of his arrival at Fig Tree. His horse had fallen with him and rendered him partially unconscious, and on remounting he had wandered off the track, and eventually, not knowing his whereabouts, had ridden down the valley outside the hills to Fig Tree.

All that day we had been anxiously expecting news of Laing's force. In the early morning we had heard artillery fire in the direction he was expected to be advancing, but amongst all the koppies it was almost impossible to judge how far it was from us, and we heard nothing afterwards. On the following evening a party of 100 mounted men under Captain Beresford was sent out to try to get touch with him. At 7.30 p.m., after the departure of this party, we saw a rocket, evidently sent up by Captain Laing. Beresford returned about 3 a.m., having found the Belingwe Force, which was halted on its way to our laager.

It appears that Laing proceeded on the 19th from Fig Tree to Inugu Mountain, and laagered in a defile there for the night. At dawn on the 20th he was heavily attacked at close quarters by the Matabele, a number of them almost gaining the laager. The enemy attempted repeated rushes, but were stopped by case from the 7-pr.

and fire from the machine-guns. The enemy fired from good cover among boulders, and were only finally driven out after three hours' fighting.

The column then moved on its road, the enemy watching its progress, and then clearing off northwards. The column endeavoured to get into the Chilili Valley, but found it impossible, and returned to camp near their laager of the previous night. The casualties were three killed, viz., Corporal Hall, Troopers Bennett and Bush, and ten wounded, viz., Sergeants Halkett and Eadie, Troopers Dick, Judge, Toulson, Stewart, Sell, Miller, Roger, and Lea; besides twenty-five Friendlies killed and eighteen wounded. There were, too, eighteen horses killed and eight wounded.

General Carrington now determined on the establishment of a series of small forts which would command the principal exits from the Matoppo, and the first was commenced by Major Robertson's Cape Boys, on a site selected by Colonel Baden-Powell, near where we had left our hospital wagon on the morning of the 20th. This was called Fort Usher. This and the others we subsequently constructed were all square forts with earthen parapets surrounded by a ditch, the sides varying from 20 yards by 20 to 20 by 30, with a small bastion at each corner.

On the evening of the 23rd Major Kershaw was

sent with C and D Squadrons of the M.R.F. to make a reconnaissance of the Umchabaze Valley eastward of the hills we had hitherto been operating in, where it was believed that a large portion if not the bulk of the impis, commanded by the indunas of that section, Sekombo, Inyanda, Umlugulu, and others, were located.

He marched at 8.30 p.m., and went as far as Purser's Farm, where he halted till daylight. He took pack animals with him to carry rations for two days. At dawn on the 24th he proceeded for about three miles, and after crossing a boggy spruit and scaling a smooth ridge he came into a grassy valley. At the top-end of the valley a good many natives were visible, and a further reconnaissance led him to the opinion that they were in some strength, with which report he returned to camp.

That morning the General had information that the impi encountered by Captain Laing near Inugu Mountain had made a raid on some of Farku's people, the latter being a friendly chief; and accordingly a force under Captain Nicholson, consisting of M.M.P., 100 dismounted and 50 mounted, Colembrander's Cape Boys 200, with 65 Friendlies, and one 2.5-in. gun, one Hotchkiss, and two Maxims, was sent off there. They came upon a body of the enemy posted in a narrow pass near where Laing's engagement had taken place.

Coleمبرander's Corps took the adjoining hills, but a heavy fire was kept up from the caves in the gorge itself, and eventually the force withdrew, having had the following wounded in a few minutes, viz., Troopers Cheves, Bern, Heathfield, and Bell; Corporal Porter and one Cape Boy.

On the 26th July we shifted the camp to a site some half-mile further west, where the water supply was rather more convenient and plentiful. Mr. Rhodes, Colonel Rhodes, and Mr. Weston Jarvis remained with us, but Lord Grey and Captain Lawley had returned to Bulawayo after the engagement at Babyan's stronghold. Colonel Baden-Powell made a reconnaissance of the Umchabaze Valley, but did not come across any natives, and the following day Major Kershaw took fifty men and proceeded to the same spot, when he found the rebels holding the same koppie he had seen them on before; and on the following two days further reconnaissances were made in the same direction, while Captain Nicholson was sent to construct a fort on some open ground facing the entrance to the Inugu Valley. He selected a very good site, and after having laid out the lines and started the work returned to our camp, leaving the garrison of twenty-five white men and twenty-five Coleمبرander's Boys to complete it.

During the two days' inaction in camp while these duties were being carried out we were able

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to attend to several details connected with the corps.

What with casualties in action and from other causes, the numbers had been materially reduced, and we had now only 721 of all ranks, distributed as follows :—

	OFFICERS.		MEN.
With Headquarters . . .	39	...	465
Major Watts' Column . . .	5	...	101
Khami Fort . . .	1	...	40
Hope Fountain Fort . . .	1	...	34
Bulawayo Hospital . . .	—	...	35
	46		675

while we had not more than between 450 and 500 horses fit for work. This was a terrible reduction of our original number of horses ; but the supply of grain had been intermittent and irregular, while the work had been incessant. The remainder had not all succumbed, many having been sent to the farm on the Bembezi, and to Hope Fountain, where there was still fairly good grazing, in hopes that with rest they might pick up. The lack of grain was felt more than ever now that the regular winter months had come, and the grass was getting every week scarcer and more dried up.

To enable us to carry rations and reserve ammunition with us in our operations in the hills we started a pack train, and Colonel Bridge sent us out some excellent pack saddles he had got up



Line of Advan



for the purpose. We picked out the strongest horses for the job, and also procured some donkeys which could carry biscuits, groceries, etc., in sacks slung across their backs.

Lieutenant Heyman was put in charge of the train, with Sergeant-Major Robinson to assist him, and everything was done to make it a success. Unfortunately, however, the horses proved to be altogether too weak for the work; some of them lay down almost as soon as loaded, and very few could do more than a mile or two even when lightly loaded. The donkeys did much better, and as long as they were not hurried struggled on for some distance under their loads.

CHAPTER IX.

THE OPERATIONS IN THE MATOPPOS IN AUGUST.

ON 30th July General Carrington left for Bulawayo, and handed over to me the command of the column, with instructions to move eastward to the Umchabaze Valley, and thence by Sekombi's stronghold, which was still further east, to the Tuli road.

It would have been impracticable to take wagons by the route the column would have to march, so they were all packed on the morning of the 31st and sent back in charge of Captain Satchwell and an escort to Usher No. 1, whence they were to move to Hope Fountain and Spargo's Store on the Tuli road. The latter road would henceforward be our line of communication with Bulawayo, so Captain Satchwell was instructed to establish a fortified post at Spargo's and send the wagons on down the Tuli road to join the column.

We took four days' rations with us on pack

animals, which for the reasons stated in the previous chapter caused us a good deal of trouble. The men carried the usual amount of ammunition, the mounted men taking a blanket and great-coat on their saddles, and the dismounted men carrying their great-coats and blankets rolled.

We hoped by marching during the night and early morning that we might be able to surprise the impi reported to be in the Umchabaze Valley, and accordingly no fires were permitted that evening, all cooking having been done previous to leaving camp.

The column, which was composed as follows:—

	OFFICERS.	MEN.	HORSES.	GUNS.
M.R.F.	.. 42	... 477	... 369	... 3 Maxims.
				1 7-pr.
M.M.P.	... 11	... 107	... 47	... 1 Hotchkiss.
				1 2.5-in.
				1 Maxim.
R.A.	... 2	... 26	... 3	... 2 2.5-in.
Colebrander's				
Corps	... 6	... 183	... 8	
Robertson's				
Cape Boys	4	... 102	... 4	
	65	895	431	9

left camp at 4 p.m., and marched in a south-easterly direction past Usher's Farm for about six miles, when a halt was made at 6.30 p.m. till 3 a.m. on 1st August, when the march was resumed. Near Purser's Farm, at 5.45 a.m., the hospital wagons and

pack train were left under a guard composed of D Squadron M.R.F., with two Maxims and the 7-pr. gun. At 6.15 the column halted close to the boggy spruit crossed by Major Kershaw in his reconnaissance of the 24th July, and from there Lieut.-Colonel Baden-Powell with Captain Coope and the scouts went to reconnoitre westwards, while Major Kershaw with C Squadron (73 strong) went forward over the ridge to the koppie he had observed the natives on. On descending this ridge a party of rebels were observed on a koppie to their left front. One troop was sent to drive them off, which they did, the enemy falling back to a second ridge which seemed a strong position. Major Kershaw attacked this with all three troops, two in front and the third on the flank, the enemy evacuating the position and retiring at once, and being pursued as far as the horses could go. A good many were killed as they fled, and Major Kershaw had no casualties. Altogether a very satisfactory and well-conducted little engagement.

At 7 a.m. I received a message from Lieut.-Colonel Baden-Powell to the effect that he was observing a body of the enemy on a ridge, and that he had discovered a position from which they could be shelled. Leaving A Squadron behind to reinforce Kershaw in case he should require support, I moved the remainder of the column

to the point indicated, and opened fire with the 2·5-in. guns at a body of the enemy observed on a ridge some 2500 yards off; the fire was well directed, and the rebels immediately retired. We could come upon no other force anywhere about, and at 9.30 a.m. halted on some open ground near a stream, and instructions were sent for the pack animals to be brought up and the hospital wagons to be sent to Spargo's.

In the afternoon we made a further reconnaissance with all the mounted troops, and captured twenty cattle and a few goats. The rebels fired a few shots at us from caves, and Major Bodle's horse was wounded. Major Kershaw rejoined us in the evening.

On the 2nd August the whole force—with the exception of the pack train, the animals of which would have been quite incapable of doing the long march that we intended to make, and which was accordingly sent by the shortest route to Dawson's Store on the Tuli road, in charge of C Squadron M.R.F., under Major Kershaw—moved at 5.45 a.m. to attack Inyanda and Sekombo's men. Soon after starting we observed some of the enemy on a ridge inaccessible from where we were. We opened fire on them and drove them off. Proceeding further eastward we came upon another small party, and after a shell or two had been fired Captain Coope and the scouts scaled

the koppie, and found a large store of grain hidden in a cave and in some clefts in the rocks. As much of the grain as could be carried away was taken, parties being sent from every detachment for this purpose, and the place was then burnt. While exploring the caves Captain Lloyd was slightly wounded in the leg by a spent bullet from a shot fired from up the hill.

At 10.15 the force moved down a valley and across a ridge to what was reported to be Sekombo's stronghold. This—a position of great natural strength—was, however, deserted, very large scherms which were found there having evidently been vacated some time. They were all burnt, and the column then marched to the Tuli road, which they struck some two miles north of Spiro's Store, and close to the scene of the engagement Captain Brand's patrol had had in April. There were many signs of the struggles to be seen, and two skeletons of whites were found and buried, and the carcasses of several horses lay on and near the road. We marched back to Dawson's Store after a short rest, arriving there about 6 p.m., having had a very arduous and fatiguing day both for men and horses.

Our experiences of the two days had been far from satisfactory. Colonel Baden-Powell, Major Kershaw, Captain Coope, and others had made careful and extended reconnaissances, and

the column had been well guided to the places which had undoubtedly been occupied by considerable numbers of the rebels ; but these had prior to our arrival all been vacated, and although Major Kershaw's engagement on the 1st had been successful, he had only encountered a comparatively small number of the rebels, and we had altogether failed to find any of the larger impi's which we knew were in the hills, or to ascertain any position where they would accept battle, and which we could therefore make our objective. It looked very much as if they had no intention of risking a general engagement, but meant to trust to the natural difficulties which their hills presented to save them from any severe loss, and to eventually perhaps exhaust our resources. If they adhered to these tactics we had a long and difficult task before us. With the small number of men available one column, or at the most two, were all that could be sent into the hills simultaneously. They could only move extremely slowly through all the difficult passes, and would cover but a very small portion of the area available for the Matabele, who with their mobility and knowledge of all the intricacies of the koppies would have no difficulty in avoiding any large column, while they watched for an opportunity of swooping down upon any patrols or small parties that might become detached from the main body. We knew,

too, that the animals we had available to carry loads would be quite unequal to any long marches or rapid movements, so that a tedious blockade seemed our only method of forcing the rebels to submission. The prospect seemed so unexciting that Lieutenant Taylor, who had joined us at Mangwe and had done such good service as a leader of the scouts, left us to return to his farm and business, from which he had been absent much longer than he had intended. We were all very sorry to lose his services.

We halted at the Umsingwani River, near Dawson's Store on the Tuli road, about the 3rd. Major Kershaw went back with an escort to Spargo's Store, about twelve miles further back, to fetch our wagons, arriving back with them in the evening. He reported a regrettable accident having occurred in the morning at Spargo's. Our friendly allies were loud in their expressions of loyalty when there was food in our camp and not much going on, but their numbers diminished in an extraordinary way when there was a prospect of any fighting; and in disgust at their behaviour one of the Native Commissioners, the day we were marching from Usher's No. 2, deprived them all of the rifles which had been served out to them. These rifles were put on one of the wagons to be sent back to Bulawayo, and in unloading the wagon at Spargo's Trooper Little pulled out by

the barrel one from which the cartridge had not been extracted. The rifle went off and he was killed instantaneously, the bullet passing through his body and wounding Troopers Champion and Sieberhagen. Little had done very well with us and was very popular in the corps, and his untimely death was much felt and deeply regretted by us all.

The following day we moved our camp to a site I had marked as suitable on the 2nd, on the Incezi River, close to where the Tuli road enters the Matoppos—a distance of about thirty-two miles from Bulawayo. Colonel Baden-Powell made a further reconnaissance into the hills, and returned in the evening with the welcome intelligence that he thought he had located a considerable body of the rebels, probably Sekombo's men, holding a narrow pass only four or five miles from our new camp, and I determined to try to attack this force early the next morning.

Accordingly at 5 a.m. on the 5th August the column started, composed as follows :—

	OFFICERS.	MEN.	HORSES.	GUNS.
M.M.P.	10	79	45	{ 1 Hotchkiss. 1 Maxim.
M.R.F.	31	328	221	2 Maxims.
R.A.	2	55	3	2 2·5-in. R.M.L.
Colebrander's Corps	4	154	7	
Robertson's Cape Boys	5	96	3	
Staff	2	—	2	
	54	712	281	6

B Squadron M.R.F., under Captain Straker, together with one 2·5-in. gun and two Maxims, and all men not fit for a march, were left to guard the camp. The men took a day's rations with them, but no great-coats, as we meant to return to camp in the evening and wished to march as light as possible. There was no possibility of getting wheeled vehicles over the ground, so we had ten stretchers carried by men detailed from Colembrander's Corps. We had had some experience of the behaviour of the Friendlies in action, and dare not trust them to carry wounded men if they should be anywhere near the fighting. A few Friendlies were employed to carry the Hotchkiss gun, which was slung on poles, and the Maxims were carried on the mules by the arrangement devised by Captain Wheeler, which worked very well. After proceeding about two or three miles over some open country and thin bush, we came to a fairly open pass between two high koppies, where we halted at 7.30 a.m. From here a view could be obtained of the position where the rebels were believed to be in force, and to assault this the column would have to pass through a narrow rocky pass. A force was accordingly detached under Captain Hon. J. Beresford, with instructions to ascend a ridge of hills to the westward and work along the summit until a point was reached, visible from where we

were, from which the pass which the main body would have to traverse would be under artillery and infantry fire. The ground this party were directed to cross over was altogether unsuitable for mounted troops, and accordingly the dismounted detachments of the M.M.P. and M.R.F. (138 men) were sent under Captain Beresford, together with the two guns R.A. under Lieutenant McCulloch, and one Hotchkiss and one Maxim under Captain Llewellyn, M.M.P. Two natives, who said they knew a path up the hill, were sent with this party.

A slight detour had to be made, and they could only make very slow progress over the rough ground, and they did not reach the foot of the hills till about 8.15 a.m. Here the guides, either from fright or ignorance, declared they did not know which way to go, and accordingly Captain Beresford and Lieutenant McCulloch reconnoitred the ground and selected what seemed the best path.

After climbing about half-way up the first hill a small plateau was reached, where a halt was made for the guns to close up; the latter had scarcely reached the plateau when about thirty Matabele were seen in front about 150 yards off. Lieutenant Cazalet, who was in command of the leading infantry detachment, at once lined the crest of the plateau and opened fire. Immediately there was a rush of another party of rebels down the hill on Beresford's right flank to within about

fifty yards of the guns, when they occupied a ridge of broken rocks and boulders and opened fire on the party. Lieutenant Hervey, with about twenty men, advanced to turn the Matabele out of this position ; but he had hardly reached the crest when he fell mortally wounded, and Sergeant-Major Ainslie, who took his place, was killed immediately afterwards. The party, however, occupied a position behind some boulders, from which they kept down the fire of the rebels and prevented their making any further advance. Mr. Weston Jarvis, who had accompanied the force as a spectator, took command of this flank at Captain Beresford's request, and rendered very valuable assistance.

In the meantime, however, other parties of the rebels appeared in the front and also on the left flank, evidently with the idea of surrounding the party and "rushing" the position. The guns were quickly off-loaded and opened fire with case shot, Lieutenant McCulloch taking the front and right flank, and Lieutenant Fraser the left. Both these officers were wounded within the first five minutes of the engagement, but they remained with their guns and directed their fire the whole time. The Friendlies who were carrying the Hotchkiss behaved in the most cowardly manner, dropping the pole and running off behind some rocks as soon as the firing began ; part of the gun could

not be found, and it was consequently never brought into action. Captain Llewellyn, however, did splendid service with his Maxim, working the gun himself, and keeping up the fire when the Matabele were within one hundred yards of him. Several bullets hit the gun and the stones round. Llewellyn was struck in the face by a splintered stone and nearly blinded for a few seconds, but he continued firing his gun as soon as he could see, and stuck there working his gun single-handed till the enemy were driven off, Trooper Holmes, of the M.R.F., being mortally wounded while trying to assist him. For nearly an hour fighting was kept up, the rebels having worked round in rear of Beresford's position and prevented his communicating with the main body, and in hopes of attracting our attention he had war rockets fired; they were not heard or seen by us, but they frightened the rebels considerably, though they did not do much execution. By 10 o'clock the Matabele had retired from the immediate vicinity of the plateau, though they continued to occupy the hills some 400 or 500 yards off pretty well all round, and it was not till nearly 10.30 that a message could be got through to us.

We had anticipated the attacked party would take about an hour before they got on to the high ground where we could see them, and a little before nine o'clock we heard firing from their

direction ; but so deceptive is the sound amongst the hills, it seemed to be gradually getting further off, and we imagined they had fallen in with and driven off a small party of the enemy. At 9.15 a.m. I sent Captain Coope with a patrol and some signallers to ascertain the situation. He had great difficulty in getting into communication with them, and it was not till 10.30 that I got a message from Beresford saying he had had a severe engagement and had driven off the enemy, but could not advance further till reinforced. I immediately ordered the whole force to advance, the scouts, with Colonel Baden-Powell, leading, followed in succession by Colembrander's and Robertson's Cape Boys, the two Maxims, and the mounted troops. On coming into the open valley traversed by Beresford's party bodies of the enemy were observed on koppies to our left. The troops swung round in this direction, and the two Cape Boy Corps—Colembrander's, under Captain Windley, on the right ; and Robertson's, led by himself and Lieutenant-Colonel Serjeant, on the left—advanced in extended order across the valley to the assault of these koppies. The mounted troops were brought up at a gallop, and C, D, and E Squadrons M.R.F., led respectively by Major Kershaw, Captain Fraser, and Captain Drury, were sent to support the left of the Cape Boys ; while the M.M.P., under Captain Nicholson, A Squadron

M.R.F, and the two Maxims were despatched to Captain Beresford, whose position was now descried at the head of the valley some distance away to our right.

The two Cape Boys Corps were first to reach the foot of the koppies and commence the attack, closely followed on their left by the three mounted squadrons, who, led by Major Kershaw, galloped to the foot of the hills, dismounted, and joined in the assault. The rebels soon began to waver and retire, and their discomfiture was increased by a heavy cross-fire Captain Beresford's party brought to bear on them as they retreated down the further side of the hills. Still some of them clung obstinately to the position, firing steadily from the shelter of innumerable caves and boulders. The ascent was extremely difficult, the men having to climb over immense boulders and rocks, and it was very well carried out by all the corps engaged.

Major Kershaw while gallantly leading his men was killed when only about half-way up, and just at the summit Sergeants Gibbs and McCloskie were killed also, Sergeant Innes Ker having been killed at the foot of the hill. At the summit of the koppies there was a lot of thick bush where the rebels made a stand, wounding Captain Windley commanding Colembrander's Corps, Lieutenant Howard, of Robertson's Corps,

and Sergeant Brabant and Corporal Curry, both of C Squadron M.R.F. But they were, however, steadily driven back, the several units working well in support of each other. About twelve noon Colonel Baden-Powell and Captain Coope found a path on the high ridge, which had been Captain Beresford's objective, and signalled down that bodies of the enemy were retiring westward, but desultory firing went on till about two p.m., when the rebels were in full retreat. No pursuit was possible, as our infantry could never have come up with the fugitives, and the ground was absolutely impracticable for horses; so I assembled the force on Beresford's plateau and marched back to camp. During the march a fresh body of rebels appeared from the narrow pass we had been originally making for, but quickly dispersed on being greeted with two or three volleys. We could only move very slowly with our wounded, and it was dark before we reached camp.

Our casualties were: One officer and four sergeants killed; five officers, one sergeant, two corporals, and two troopers wounded. Their names have all been given in the narrative of the action.

As in former actions, it is extremely difficult to estimate the numbers of the enemy and their losses; but from the reports of the different officers engaged it is considered their numbers were probably nearly 3000, and their losses about

200. It was the severest engagement we had had, the rebels fighting with great determination and, in some instances, with desperate courage. They had evidently made up their minds for a general engagement in the belief they had only to deal with Beresford's party, whom they hoped to surround and annihilate. The troops behaved extremely well. Beresford's party were subjected to a very trying ordeal, and it was owing to his coolness throughout that the rebel attack was driven off as it was. All did well in the assault, C Squadron of the M.R.F. being perhaps especially conspicuous. Major Kershaw's death was a severe loss to the force. In this and other actions he had shown himself a particularly able and gallant officer, and with his quiet, unassuming manner he had won the respect and affection of all ranks.

The next day General Carrington arrived in camp, accompanied by Mr. Rhodes. We had sent him a short message from the scene of action, and Baden-Powell had ridden back along the road that evening to meet him and give him an account of the action. He had a parade of all the troops and congratulated us on the successful result of the engagement, and he subsequently communicated to us a congratulatory telegram he had received from the High Commissioner. Lord Grey and Sir Richard Martin also sent messages.

Poor Hervey died about 12 noon this day. His wound we knew was mortal, and he bore all the pain he had with the utmost fortitude and resignation. He had only been with us a short time, but he had many friends and not a single enemy, and his death was sincerely mourned by us all. He and Kershaw and the others who fell that day were all buried near our camp under a big tree. There is a fort there now, and the graves we know will be well looked after. Poor young Holmes, who lingered for three days, is buried in the same spot. He was the son of Colonel Holmes, lately commanding 2nd Battalion Welsh Regiment, and was only just 18.

To try to ascertain if there were any signs of the rebels about, Colonel Baden-Powell with 100 men went out on the 6th to reconnoitre. They went some distance down the Tuli road and got on the southern side of the Matoppos, and in a secluded valley came across 20 cattle and some sheep, which they captured. As they were driving them off some small parties of the rebels were seen on adjoining hills, but made no effort to prevent the cattle being taken. Baden-Powell, however, thought it possible he might be attacked in a narrow defile through which the road passes, about two miles from our camp, and sent word to me to this effect. I accordingly sent two squadrons under Major Bodle to occupy the

defile. They duly met Baden-Powell, and the two parties returned to camp with the cattle, having encountered no opposition. It was important to collect any grain we could, so the Cape Boys under Major Robertson were sent off to the cave where Captain Lloyd was wounded on the 2nd, where we had left a considerable quantity. We could get a wagon pretty near there, and they returned in the evening with about 2000 lbs.

On the 7th the Cape Boys collected more grain and brought back an old woman they had found in one of the caves, who turned out to be the mother of Inyanda, one of the indunas. Mr. Rhodes had a long talk with her, as he knew Inyanda personally. She said that a good many of the indunas and the old men wanted to come in and surrender, but that the young men wanted to go on with the fighting. We had apparently fought several impis on the 5th, including Sekombo's; but it was doubtful whether Umlugulu's men had taken part in the action, and amongst the latter were some of the most prominent of the rebels.

Captain Beresford made a reconnaissance on the 7th over the scene of our engagement, but only saw a few rebel scouts on some hills some distance off. One of the objects of his visit was to burn all the long grass in the valley, as this had consider-

ably interfered with our firing. Colonel Baden-Powell and Mr. Richardson, one of the Native Commissioners, went to try to find a path by which we could take the column on to the ridge the detached party had been making for on the 5th, without entering the pass we had approached by that day, and which would be sure to be watched by the rebel scouts. He managed to find one which, though difficult, would be practicable for men and mules and a small number of horses, and with General Carrington's approval we arranged to march by this path the following night, so as to reach the ridge by dawn. We hoped from there to be able to attack the stronghold which had been our original objective on the 5th. The General had decided on the construction of a fort close to the site of our camp, and part of the force was set to work on this at once under the superintendence of Captain Nicholson; and as the Tuli road was now to be our line of communication with Bulawayo, we had to establish another intermediate post at the Umsingwani River, between our camp and Spargo's. This post was under the command of Lieutenant Cazalet.

On the 8th Major Bodle made a reconnaissance down to the southern side of the Matoppo to see if there were any signs of the rebels leaving the hills, but nothing was seen. As before, scouts were observed on distant hills, evidently watching

the party. Owing to the arrival of important telegrams from Mashonaland, General Carrington had to return to Bulawayo, but he left me instructions to carry out the march into the hills as previously arranged, and accordingly at 12 midnight on the 8th the column started, composed as under:—

	OFFICERS.	MEN.	HORSES.	GUNS.
M.M.P.	7	89	3	1 Hotchkiss.
M.R.F.	27	277	34	2 Maxims.
R.A.	1	29	—	2 2·5" R.M.L.
„ (Drivers)	—	36	—	
Colebrander's Corps	5	153	1	
Robertson's Corps	4	88	1	
	44	672	39	5

The whole force was dismounted except the scouts under Captain Coope and D Squadron, M.R.F. under Captain Fraser, the latter forming the rear guard. Each man carried two days' rations and seventy rounds of ammunition, but no blankets were taken. We left the camp in command of Captain Whitaker, M.M.P., with 260 non-commissioned officers and men, with two Maxims and one 7-pr. and one 2·5-in. R.M.L. gun. It was necessary to have a larger force than usual in camp owing to the number of horses and transport animals left. The two artillery officers were both in hospital from their wounds, and Captain Llewellyn, M.M.P., was appointed to the command of the two moun-

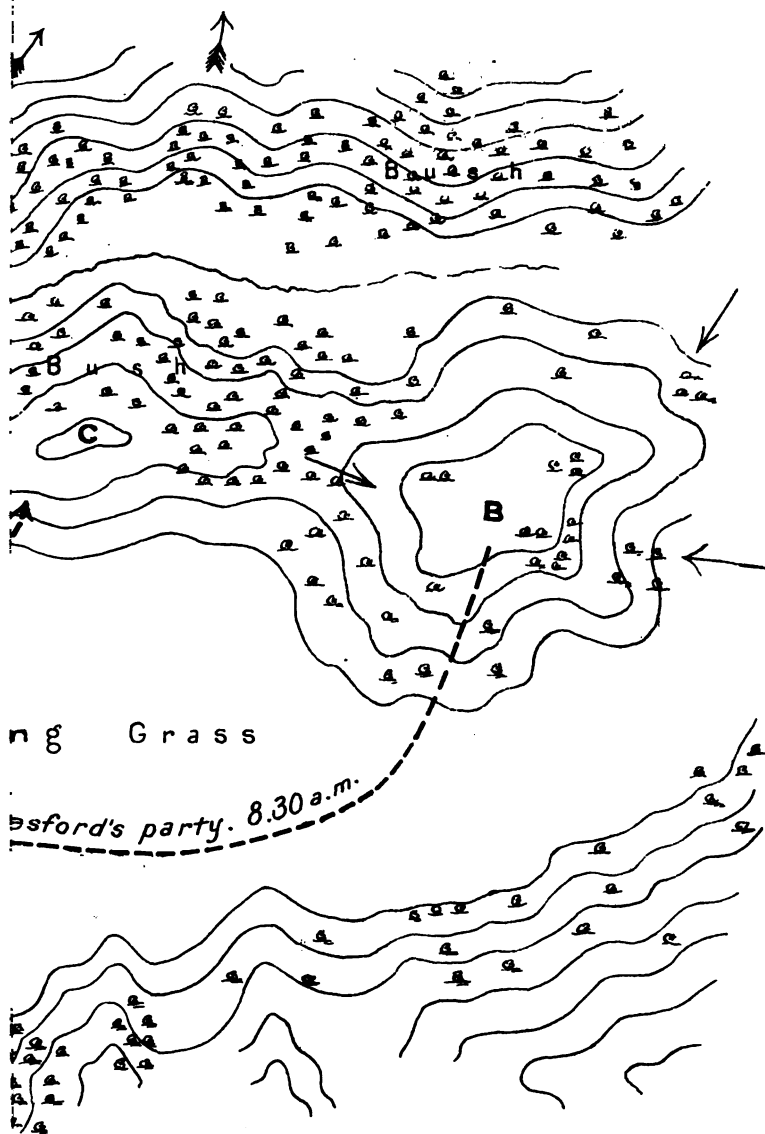
tain guns, Lieutenant Mullins taking Captain Windley's place in command of the detachment of Colembrander's Corps. Unfortunately, too, we were deprived of the services of Captain Turner, the Adjutant, who had caught a chill after the action of the 5th August, which developed into a sharp attack of rheumatic fever. During his absence Captain Beresford acted as Adjutant.

The march was a very difficult one; even before the ascent of the hill was commenced we had to go very slowly, and I found the few horses belonging to the scouts made so much noise slipping about that I had them all sent back to the rear guard. From the foot of the hill we had to go mostly in single file, stumbling in the dark over the rough, broken ground, and now and then clambering over huge boulders and rocks with overhanging koppies on either side of us, from which a watchful enemy could have inflicted considerable loss on us. Baden-Powell guided us as unerringly as if it had been broad daylight, but the units constantly lost touch with each other, and frequent halts were necessary, Major Bodle, Captains Beresford and de Moleyns, Lieutenants Villiers and Moncrieffe, all working hard at different points along the column. Unfortunately the rear guard with their horses took longer to get over the bad places, and lost touch altogether with the column. We halted for some

time, but they missed the path, and eventually after some efforts to find it retraced their steps to the camp. We felt the absence of our horses the next day, when we should have been able to reconnoitre a good deal further if we had had them, and the mounted officers were mostly without their rations, which had been packed in the wallets. It was an exciting night, and I do not think any of us were sorry to find ourselves, as day broke, in some fairly open ground close to the foot of the ridge. We ascended at once, and about 6.30 a.m. reached the summit of the first ridge, from which we got a pretty extensive view over the country—but there were no natives in sight. The ridge did not, however, as we had expected it would, command the narrow pass leading to Mnyakavulu's stronghold, and a further advance was necessary across an open valley and up another ridge before this could be seen. However, when it did come into view we found it deserted, though the huts were standing, and the caves were clearly visible in the side of the hill. A few shells were fired into it and at some kraals and inhabited koppies in view, and then we breakfasted and rested till about twelve noon. Then a further advance was made down a broad valley, in which was a running stream, to a spot believed to be Umlugulu's stronghold; but this, too, was deserted.

During this march the Cape Boys were detached to burn some kraals visible on our right, and in doing this a sergeant was wounded by a shot fired from a koppie, but no body of the rebels could be seen.

We determined to remain here for the night and see if we could draw on any force of the rebels. In the afternoon Colembrander's Corps captured about thirty cattle, which they found in a narrow gorge near. Exasperated at this, a few Matabele crept up through some thick bush which was on one side of where we were halted, and fired into the laager. No one was hit, and the party was quickly driven out by Colembrander's and Robertson's Corps. A party getting water from the stream was also fired on about sunset. Special precautions were taken to repel any attack during the night, a detachment under Major Robertson occupying a detached post to prevent any force creeping up through the bushes. It was a most uncomfortable night. We were on one of the highest points in the hills, and soon after sunset a bitterly cold wind, accompanied by driving rain, swept over us. We were without blankets, and altogether very cold when morning came. The Matabele feel the cold very much, and if they had any intention of attacking us, the inclement weather no doubt put them off. We



ng Grass

Esford's party. 8.30 a.m.

Sketch
of
Action of 5th August.

Scale

0 100 200 300 400 500 600 700 Yards

returned to camp the next day by way of the narrow pass, and it was very fortunate for us that we had not to assault it. For about a quarter of a mile the only way through it was by a winding path, so narrow that the loads had to be taken off the mules before they could get through, and commanded by steep, overhanging cliffs; altogether a very nasty place to have had to assault.

The result of our two days in the hills was to lead us to the belief that all the impis collected in this neighbourhood had dispersed after the engagement of the 5th, and were by this time scattered in different directions throughout the hills, and that there was no organized body of rebels able or willing to risk an engagement, even to prevent the burning of their homesteads and the capture of their cattle.

CHAPTER X.

CONCLUDING OPERATIONS TILL DISRANDMENT.

ON our return to camp we learnt that the troops under Colonel Alderson had gained a brilliant victory over the rebels in Mashonaland, after storming and capturing the stronghold of one of their most important chiefs. The fighting had apparently been very similar in character to our action on the 5th August, and the death of poor Captain Haynes, while leading his men to the assault, occurred under almost identical conditions to that of Major Kershaw.

Colonel Baden-Powell left for Bulawayo the next morning to resume his duties there. To me personally he had rendered the most cordial co-operation and assistance, for which I can never be sufficiently grateful, and the success of the various operations in the hills was unquestionably due in no small measure to his able reconnoitring, and the wonderful knowledge he had acquired of all the intricacies of the fastnesses of the hills.

Major Bodle, too, was called away by Sir R. Martin to undertake the recruiting of the new police force. We were all very sorry to part with him from the force to which he had rendered such very valuable service.

On the 13th August a detachment of fifty Mounted Infantry of the 2nd Battalion York and Lancaster Regiment came into camp; they were the first regular troops, except the artillery, to arrive. They all looked very well, and their horses seemed refreshingly fit, almost fat, by the side of ours. Captain de Moleyns returned to Bulawayo for duty there on the General's Staff, and Lieutenant Lowther also left us, the fighting being seemingly pretty well over.

Reports were now received that nearly all, or at any rate the majority, of the rebel indunas wished to surrender, but that they were afraid to come out of the hills. As a means of communicating with them Mr. Richardson, the Native Commissioner, took back Inyanda's mother to her kraal on the 11th and put a white flag over it, giving her another, and telling her to inform the men when they came that if they wished to surrender they were to hoist it. The flag was taken away by the men to the indunas that night, and the following day the old woman was removed also; but on the 15th the flag was replaced on the kraal, which was taken to be an

intimation that some, at any rate, wished to come in. Mr. Rhodes, who had been in Bulawayo for a few days, now came back to camp, accompanied by Mr. Colembrander, and on learning of the white flag having been hoisted, he undertook to open negotiations with the rebel indunas.

Two of Colembrander's Boys, who volunteered for the duty, and a Matabele prisoner who was brought out from Bulawayo, went into the hills to see the indunas. They returned in the evening reporting that they had had an indaba with the rebels, the two chiefs, Sekombo and Inyanda, being present. The latter asked for two days to be allowed in which messengers could be sent to the other chiefs.

By means of one or two intermediate stations Captain Dent had established telegraphic communication with Bulawayo, and we were somewhat surprised at receiving a message on the 17th from the General, to the effect that the rebels were reported to be massing on the western side of the Matoppos, near Inugu, and that the column was to proceed there at once. It really looked as if they had opened the negotiations for surrender with a view of keeping the column inactive on the east while they massed their impis on the western side of the hills.

Captain Kekewich had reconnoitred the ground with a view of finding a way by which our

transport wagons could move along the base of the hills from east to west instead of having resource to the circuitous route we had sent them by before, and had reported it feasible. Many of our wagons were, however, in Bulawayo collecting supplies, and we could only send off part of the force that afternoon, amounting to 17 officers, 328 men, 169 horses, with the two R.A. guns and 13 wagons, under Captain Nicholson. Other wagons arrived from Bulawayo the following evening, and the remainder of the force, consisting of 27 officers, 510 men, 307 horses, with two Maxims, one Hotchkiss and one 7-pr. gun, and 23 wagons, started the next morning, the 19th.

We left at the fort, with which good progress had been made and which was practically ready for occupation, two officers, 56 men, and one Maxim; while an additional party of one officer and 25 men of Colembrander's Corps was left as escort to Mr. Rhodes.

Meantime on the 18th two Matabele had come into camp, one from Sekombo, the other from Inyanda, saying that their chiefs were willing to surrender, but that they could not do so until all the other indunas had been communicated with. Lieutenant Moncreiffe accordingly remained in Mr. Rhodes' camp to bring me intelligence of any further communication with the rebels.

The message brought by the envoys from the

rebels was communicated at once to General Carrington, and on our way to Inugu I received an order to halt the column near Fort Usher and await further instructions. It took us two days to get to the site selected by Captain Nicholson, near our old camp at Usher No. 2, the rear half of the column arriving there on the afternoon of the 20th. We had to cross about half-way a steep, rocky pass in the hills, which took us some time to get over with the wagons.

The report of the rebels massing near Inugu was, it appeared, altogether exaggerated; but parties had undoubtedly been raiding the women and cattle belonging to the friendly chief Faku, and more raids were anticipated. So Captain Nicholson was sent with the detachment of the York and Lancaster Regiment and the scouts to try to intercept the raiders.

On the morning of the 22nd Lieutenant Moncreiffe arrived, having ridden through the night from our late camp to bring me a letter from Mr. Rhodes, saying that he had had an indaba on the 21st with the following chiefs, viz. :—

Somalubana	Manyoba
Mlugulu	Maleni
Sekombo	Sikhota
Dhliso	Nyanda
Gunu	Bidi

and thirty-four other heads of towns (all representing districts).

It appears that Jan Grootboom, the scout, had gone into the hills with two of Colembrander's Boys, and had interviewed some of the chiefs. They had said that they were willing to surrender but that they were afraid to come out of the hills, and that if Mr. Rhodes would come into the hills they would make their submission to him and tell him their grievances. Accordingly early in the morning Mr. Rhodes, accompanied only by Dr. Sauer, Mr. Johann Colembrander, and Mr. Stent, went into the hills and met all the chiefs. It was undoubtedly a very plucky thing to do; there was every reason, it is true, to believe that the indunas were in earnest and were anxious for peace; but even if this were so, and no treachery was intended, which was by no means certain, there was always the chance that the temptation of killing the big white chief might be irresistible to some of the younger and more excitable warriors. The indaba lasted for four hours. The indunas expatiated on their grievances, real and imaginary, at some length; they admitted they had been beaten, but would by no means allow that they were at the end of their resources. However, they all expressed themselves as tired of fighting, though with the usual procrastination of natives they pleaded for time to collect their

O

people, and to communicate with the chiefs of other districts not represented at the meeting.

All hostilities were suspended after this meeting, and Captain Nicholson was ordered to return to camp. A detachment of twenty men was, however, sent to Faku's kraal to establish a post near there for his protection.

The Mounted Infantry of the York and Lancaster Regiment were sent into Bulawayo to join a patrol of regular troops that was being sent back to the Shangani River to deal with any disaffected tribes that might still be in that district.

Mr. Rhodes transferred his camp to a site near Fort Usher on the 26th, in order to hold a meeting with Babyan, Mholi, Dhliso, and other chiefs of the eastern section of the Matoppos. Captain Beresford, Lieutenant Moncreiffe, and I attended this indaba which took place on the 28th. There was a large number of natives present, several young men being among them, whose demeanour was not nearly so submissive as theirs who came at the first. They detailed their grievances as before, and expressed their wish to surrender, but said they must be granted time.

Captain Shadwell, of the York and Lancaster Regiment, arrived on the 27th to take Major Kershaw's place with the corps. Almost the day after he joined he was taken ill with dysentery, from which he succumbed in the hospital

at Bulawayo on the 7th September. He was a great personal friend of mine, and I felt his death very much; he had had no chance of taking any part in the campaign, but he was a very able officer, beloved by all who knew him, and his death was a great loss to the regiment and to the service.

We had now to undergo a long spell of inaction, not unwelcome at first after the constant work we had had, but inexpressibly irksome and tedious after awhile. Sir Richard Martin came out to our camp, together with Lord Grey and Mr. Rhodes, and held a further indaba with some of the indunas on the 9th September. He very rightly insisted that no surrender was satisfactory, or indeed a submission at all, unless all the arms were given up. This the Matabele kept on evading, promising to give up rifles one day, the next saying that in their own particular tribe there were none, and making all sorts of excuses. They were repeatedly told that, unless they came to a decision shortly and surrendered to our satisfaction, hostilities would be recommenced and they would be blockaded in the hills. It was impossible to gauge what amount of food they had stored in the hills, some tribes had probably a good deal more than others; but in any case sowing-time was now at hand, and if

no crops were sown this season they were sure to be starving the following year. Unarmed men and women were allowed to come out of the hills and begin sowing, and many availed themselves of this. Mr. Rhodes all this time remained in his camp, close to ours, interviewing chief after chief, and warning them of the folly of not coming in and surrendering. The news of the surrender of the chiefs in the Matoppos soon spread, and in the western and north-western districts the natives came to surrender in large numbers, bringing in 200 or 300 rifles. They were probably worse off for food than almost any of the others, several being in a most emaciated condition. Parties were still holding out in the north-eastern and eastern districts. The patrol, composed of detachments of the 7th Hussars and York and Lancaster and West Riding Regiments, under Colonel Baden-Powell, went up to Inyati, through Tabas-i-Mhamba, which they found deserted, and on to the Shangani River. They came upon several small parties of rebels, whom they dispersed, captured the chief Umweni, worked through a great portion of the Somabula Forest, captured the stronghold of the chief Wedza, and finally joined hands at Gwelo with the other party of the 7th Hussars and West Riding Regiment under Colonel Paget, the latter having operated against

the several chiefs in that district. Altogether a wonderful amount of country was covered, and their rapid movement and prompt action had much to do with bringing the rebels in the district to a speedy submission.

In Mashonaland the troops under Colonel Alderson had had several successes. Major Watts, with a small party, had captured the chief Makoni, and his execution undoubtedly caused a speedy collapse of the rebellion in that country.

Our doings during September provide little worthy of mention. We sent off a patrol of 150 men, under Captain Drury, to work round the Mulingwani Hills, a sort of continuation of the eastern section of the Matoppos. They were away about a fortnight, and reported on their return that the natives in that district were all surrendering and only anxious to be allowed to sow their crops.

We established a new fort at the entrance of the Umchabaze Valley midway between Forts Usher and Inceza, the latter being renamed Umlugulu, and improved the roads between all the forts. The forts at Hope Fountain and Spargo's and Umsingwani on the Tuli road were abolished, one small intermediate post between Bulawayo and our camp being all that was necessary.

Lieutenant Moncreiffe had resigned his appoint-

ment in the corps and gone off to Johannesburg, having done very good service, and no doubt enjoyed his first campaign.

At the end of September we took a party down the Tuli road to the Gwanda district to establish two forts on that road, one near Grainger's Store and the other at the River Manzinyama, distant from Bulawayo forty-eight and seventy-five miles respectively. We found two very good sites, and having laid out the forts and started the works, left the garrisons which were to occupy them (fifty men and one Maxim) to complete them. On our way down the road we were much struck with the extraordinarily difficult bit of country Captain Brand's patrol had had to pass through when they were attacked so determinedly by the Matabele in April. Father Bartlémy, who had accompanied the party, gave us a graphic description of the engagement as we went along the road, and the only wonder is that with men and horses dropping every minute, and only one small wagon in which to carry all the wounded, they escaped annihilation.

On our return to our camp we found that negotiations for the surrender of the rebels had so far progressed that all the chiefs had come out of the hills to tender their submission. The proclamation originally published by the High Commissioner had been so far amended as to give a pardon to all the indunas who surrendered and

who had not instigated or been implicated in any of the murders or outrages committed at the commencement of the rebellion, and they had availed themselves of the offer almost without exception. Mr. Rhodes' diplomacy had been so successful that they not only came to his camp, but they met there and consorted with the friendly chiefs, Gambo, Faku, and others, against whom they had sworn undying vengeance a few weeks before. Still the arms had not been given up, each chief professing he did not know where his men had put theirs, and promising to bring all he could. Needless to say these promises were never fulfilled..

We were now coming to about the hottest season of the year in Matabeleland, and although the heat can never at any time be said to be oppressive, any long marches at this period would have been very trying to both men and animals. The rains might be expected any time after the end of November, and if it was intended to keep the force together over the rainy season it was important that steps should be taken at once to construct huts for their accommodation. This had already been done at all the forts, where mud huts had been built for the men, with corrugated iron sheds for stores, and supplies sufficient to last the respective garrisons for from three to six months were sent to each, as it was quite possible that should there be very heavy rain there might be great difficulty in

keeping up a regular transport service with them. We selected a suitable site for a camp, and had poles cut ready for enough huts to accommodate about 400 men, but the prospect of remaining in garrison in the country over the rainy season was not looked forward to with pleasure by any of us, and to the men it would have been especially uncongenial and irksome. They were certainly bound by their engagement to serve for such period as their services were required, but they had never anticipated this period exceeding six months, as it already had. Many of them had given up profitable berths in the Colony to come up with the corps, and their chances of re-employment were diminishing with their prolonged absence, while, notwithstanding all precautions that might be taken, the probability was that there would be a great deal of sickness in the wet season.

They were all, therefore, greatly relieved to hear about the middle of October that it had been practically decided that the corps was to be disbanded and marched down country as soon as their places at the different forts could be taken by the new police who had been recruited by Major Bodle and Captain Gosling, at Cape Town and other places in the Colony, and were on their way to Bulawayo.

The news was confirmed on the 22nd by a telegram from the High Commissioner authorizing

the disbandment of the corps as soon as arrangements could be made for them to be sent down country. All the men, who from various causes had been discharged from the corps, hitherto had received £5 for their passage down country and £10 for their food on the way. In many cases, however, this had been very unsatisfactory; the men had been tempted to spend their money either in Bulawayo before leaving or on the earlier stages of the journey, and had become almost destitute. General Carrington was, therefore, very anxious that the remainder should be marched down in parties under their own officers, and the B.S.A. Company very generously acceded to this, though it meant an increased expenditure of something over £3000, as the men of course continued to draw pay until they arrived at Mafeking. Captain Turner had sufficiently recovered from his illness to assist in all the details connected with the discharges and final disbandment of the corps.

In the beginning of October a great number of men were permitted to take their discharge, and by the 15th October our numbers had been reduced to twenty-three officers and 449 men, of whom 15 officers and 202 men were at the base camp, the others being distributed amongst the various forts. Ten officers and 289 men marched down country in two parties, starting from our

camp on the 27th and 30th October respectively, arriving at Mafeking on the 4th and 9th December, where they were paid off and dismissed by the Adjutant, Captain Turner. The Cape Boy Corps under Major Robertson marched down at the same time.

Our horses, whose numbers in September had been reduced to 396, were still further reduced to 354 by the middle of October, and of these eighty-five were practically unfit for work and were turned out to graze, the remainder being handed over in Bulawayo and at the various forts for the use of the new Rhodesian Mounted Police.

Prior to their departure the corps was inspected by General Carrington, who addressed them in highly complimentary terms on the work they had done, and he subsequently issued the following general order:—

“General Orders by Major-General Sir Frederick Carrington, K.C.M.G., Commanding Forces.

“The General Officer Commanding having been authorized by His Excellency the High Commissioner to disband the Matabeleland Relief Force and the Cape Boy Corps, desires, in bidding farewell to Lieut.-Colonel Plumer, Major Robertson, the officers, N.C. officers and men composing these corps, to assure them of the high appreciation which he feels of the services they have rendered in assisting to bring the operations in Matabeleland to a successful conclusion. The Major-General

is proud to have had such corps under his command, and to be able to commend equally their dash and gallantry in action, and their discipline and good conduct under the hardships of an arduous campaign.

"The roll of casualties in action is a sufficient indication in itself of the part borne by the corps in the war, and the Major-General trusts that the memory and example of the officers and men who have met with a soldier's death in the execution of their duty will remain long in the recollection of their comrades now returning to their ordinary vocations in life.

"By order,

"(Signed) C. B. VYVYAN, Captain, Brigade-Major,

"For Chief Staff Officer.

"BULAWAYO, 27th October, 1896."

We were all much gratified, too, at receiving the following letter from Earl Grey, the Administrator of the country, and the subjoined address from the local and public bodies in Bulawayo :—

"DEAR COL. PLUMER,

"I cannot allow you to break up your camp on the eve of your return march from Mafeking without conveying to you some expression of the gratitude felt towards you by the inhabitants of Bulawayo for the distinguished services you have rendered to the Government and to the people of Rhodesia. The rapidity with which your column was recruited, horsed, equipped, and marched up to the relief of Bulawayo was, in itself, an achievement of which you and every member of your force have abundant reason to be proud. The many

conspicuous services your force has rendered in the field, notably the two brilliant engagements on the Khami on the 24th May, only forty-one days after the date of the first detachment leaving Mafeking; your night march to Tabas-i-Mhamba, and the capture of the important rebel stronghold; and your several engagements in the Matoppos—will be long remembered by the people of Bulawayo. I wish on behalf of the Administration and of the English settlers of Matabeleland to acknowledge with grateful thanks the part played by all your officers, non-commissioned officers, and men, who have so gallantly and ably assisted you; and I would venture to hope that many of them may like the country in which they have been campaigning for the last six months and its people well enough to induce them to return at an early date, with the object of establishing for themselves a permanent home among us in Rhodesia.

“Believe me, my dear Colonel, with all good wishes for your future success,

“Always yours truly,

“GREY.

“BULAWAYO, 26th October.”

“*To the Officer Commanding, the Officers, Non-commissioned Officers, and Men of the Matabeleland Relief Force :—*

“On the disbandment of your force, peace being restored with the Matabele in revolt, we wish on behalf of the people of Matabeleland to thank you for having so loyally come to our help in May last. You volunteered at Johannesburg, Mafeking, and other places on learning our need, and when the outlook here was very

serious on account of the strength of the native revolt and the difficulty of equipping in this country a large force with horses, arms, and provisions. Your march from Mafeking to the Khami River was one of unusual length and difficulty compared with earlier marches in South African history, and your arrival enabled us to combine in effective operations in the field. The fighting that followed was sufficiently arduous and severe to test the character of your force, and to greatly gain for it the high reputation which it enjoys. We are aware that though you appreciated the difficulties of the campaign from the first, yet that in point of time, the campaign has been much longer than you, as a volunteer force, expected at the outset, and we also bear in mind the unusually heavy list of casualties that the Matabeleland Relief Force has suffered in the Matoppo Hills.

"We trust you will have a rapid and favourable march on your return to the railway terminus, and that, though we may hereafter see some of you individually settled in this country, there will never again be need for such services as you have lately rendered in so thorough a manner when combined as a Matabeleland Relief Force.

"BULAWAYO, 27th October, 1896."

I and the other Imperial officers who had served with the corps travelled down to Mafeking by coach, and we took leave of the men before they started on their march. I think the farewell regimental order published, which is given below, expresses our feelings on that occasion.

“Before the disbandment of the corps the Commanding Officer wishes to place on record his appreciation of the loyal support he has received throughout from all ranks. He is fully sensible that without such co-operation, and assistance the work which the force has accomplished would not have been possible. He and the other Imperial officers who have served with the corps are proud to have been associated with it, and it is hoped that all will carry away with them pleasant recollections of their services with the Matabeleland Relief Force in 1896.”

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CHAPTER XI.

CONCLUDING REMARKS.

BUT few notes are necessary to conclude the narrative of the campaign. The Matabeleland Relief Force had only a short existence of eight months, but during that time they travelled over a good deal of country, and did a considerable amount of hard work. As has been stated in the narrative, there were a good many at the outset who, though they were passed by doctors at Kimberley and Mafeking, soon showed they were not physically capable of enduring the hardships of a campaign; and these were nearly all invalided from Macloutsi or soon after our arrival in Matabeleland. After these had been weeded out, the health of the remainder continued excellent, the percentage of sick being extremely small right up to the end of the operations. There were cases of fever and dysentery of course, the latter especially, and a few cases ended fatally; but when it is taken into consideration that during all the time we had no tents, and that we lived day and night in the open air, it

will be readily understood how greatly in our favour all the conditions of climate were. The cold nights which we experienced in June and July were certainly trying, and were no doubt mainly accountable for the cases of sickness we had ; but we had practically no rain, and the heat even in the middle of the day was never at any time excessive.

Our food was certainly monotonous, though we never actually ran short ; the chief drawback lay in the absence of fresh vegetables, which were of course unprocurable. During the earlier months we nearly always had fresh meat, and except on one or two rare occasions we always had plenty of tea and sugar, salt, and meal or flour. The men formed small messes among themselves, usually consisting of six or eight, and some became adepts in cooking and making the most out of their rations. Colonel Bridge procured us later on some compressed vegetables, which, when stewed up with the meat, made excellent soup ; and Weil's and Maconochie's "road rations," in which vegetables are mixed in the tins with the meat, were welcome changes to the ordinary "bully beef."

Tea was the staple drink throughout, and it is wonderful what a lot of work can be got through on it. In South Africa men are accustomed to a ration of "dop" or Cape brandy every day, and no doubt when it can be given it is a good thing

for men doing hard work in the open air ; but it was only on one or two occasions that there was any available. We nearly always had lime juice with us, and issued it from time to time ; the men did not care much about it, but it was of course an excellent thing medicinally. A great danger to health lay in the drinking of impure and polluted water. The fact that tea was invariably drunk by the men at all meals when halted ensured the water being boiled then, but though warnings were being constantly given, it was difficult to prevent men on the march drinking from pools they came across, and the risk of these having been contaminated was of course much increased by the prevalence of rinderpest.

Our clothing was of such a mixed character that no description of it can well be given. We all had, as long as we could, cord breeches and either putties or gaiters, and rough cord or cloth coats. The blue jerseys were very useful, as were our nightcaps, which we should have been very sorry to part with. Slouch hats were worn all through, and are the most suitable head-gear for the country.

No comparison can be drawn, as far as the corps is concerned, between the Lee-Metford and the Martini-Henry rifles. We had nothing but the latter, and they certainly stood through the campaign remarkably well. Not one single case of "jamming" occurred, as far as I know, and

though they were subject to a good deal of rough usage, and our supply of cleaning oil occasionally ran short, yet when, shortly before the disbandment of the corps, they came to be inspected by an armourer there were remarkably few which were in need of any repairs at all.

As will be gathered from the narrative, the Maxim guns had very little to do, chiefly owing to the tactics of the enemy and the nature of the ground we had to work over; but their value to us must not be estimated altogether by the amount of execution they did. On the line of march they were of great service as a protection for the wagons, and on several occasions when flying columns were despatched away from the laager the presence of the Maxims rendered it perfectly safe to leave only a small garrison in charge of the latter, and considerably more men were thereby available in the field; most of them are now in the different forts throughout the country. As has been stated, neither the naval carriages, nor the galloping carriages on which two of the guns of the Bulawayo Field Force were mounted, were suitable for the country. In the hills the latter guns were subsequently carried, like the Hotchkiss, by "friendlies" on long poles; but three poles were required for the gun, tripod, and ammunition, a distinct hindrance to rapidity of action, especially when the unreliability of the

"friendly" carriers is taken into account. By using mules, on the other hand, a gun complete with its ammunition was always carried on one mule, and this arrangement, which worked so well with us, would probably always be adopted under similar circumstances.

The mountain guns worked admirably and did excellent service, and the B.S.A. Company did very well on the conclusion of the campaign to purchase them with their mules, harness, and equipment complete. The mules kept their condition throughout wonderfully, and their tractability, as compared with the ordinary transport mules of the country, showed how much can be made of these animals if they are carefully handled and well looked after.

It was certainly a hard campaign for the horses. The difficulties of obtaining food for them were so great that it frequently happened that for days together they had no grain at all, and only fed on the little grass they could pick up, and this when they were doing marches of about twenty miles a day. The average amount of food throughout the eight months cannot have been more than six pounds of grain per diem, and under the circumstances it was wonderful they stood up as well as they did. All of them, with the exception of those sent from Johannesburg and a few others, were taken straight off the veldt, where they

had been feeding on nothing but grass, and they certainly did better than the large Colonial-bred horses which are used for cavalry regiments in Natal, and kept on a high rate of feeding. The small horses seemed to stand the work very much better than the big ones, being hardier and better able to carry on with a small amount of food. The bulk of the grain supplies brought up from the south consisted of mealies, very few oats being sent up. We depended a good deal on what we were able to take from the various Matabele kraals and stores, and there we very rarely found anything but Kaffir corn, which is far from nourishing, and is, moreover, heating, and if given in large quantities liable to be injurious to horses. We never had any oat hay, the excellent forage procurable in Cape Colony and Natal.

The Mounted Infantry saddles purchased from the Imperial Government proved very satisfactory, standing all the rough work very well. The only objection to them was that they were of a pattern too large for our small horses, and the difficulties of fitting the saddles increased as time went on and the horses fell away in condition, while the arches, if anything, opened. The saddles procured from the Diamond Fields Horse, which were of a Mounted Infantry pattern with panels, did fairly well; but they were not of such good quality as the Government saddles, and the panels

required stuffing from time to time, which was very difficult to get done. The Colonial saddles bought from firms in the country were altogether inferior in quality, and were gradually discarded.

The difficulties connected with our transport animals have been already explained. The supply of animals just lasted out the requirements of the campaign and no more, and the numbers sent up to Rhodesia and other parts, where the rinderpest had destroyed the oxen, had so diminished the stock in Cape Colony that by the end of the year mules were being imported to South Africa from Buenos Ayres and Monte Video, and more will undoubtedly be required. The mules, like the horses, suffered terribly from want of food, and in many cases their condition was rendered much worse by the carelessness and incompetence of the drivers and others placed in charge of them. Drivers of any kind were most difficult to obtain; some were white men and some natives; very few were reliable, and nearly all were absent for some days after they had received their pay, and some deserted altogether. Colonel Bridge on his arrival did his utmost to organize some kind of transport corps, and certainly effected considerable improvement in the arrangements, but he had a most difficult task.

The discipline of the men of the Matabeleland Relief Force was extremely good. On the march

up and during the earlier days in Matabeleland there were a certain number of men who by their conduct seemed unlikely to add to the efficiency of the corps, and these were discharged ; but there were practically none of these discharges after the end of May, and during the whole period of eight months there were only eight men who committed offences sufficiently serious to be brought before a court of officers, while the fines and stoppages of pay, the only other punishment inflicted, only amounted to £200. The corps was certainly never stationed for a single night in Bulawayo, and though men were allowed there on leave from time to time, there were but few opportunities of obtaining drink ; still, taking into consideration all the circumstances, the absence of crime and general good behaviour were remarkable and distinctly creditable.

The corps cost the B.S.A. Company about £250,000, made up roughly as follows :—

Pay	£70,000
Rations	60,000
Forage	45,000
Arms and equipments	23,000
Horses	20,000
Railway and other travelling expenses	15,000
Wagons and mules	13,000
Miscellaneous	4,000
Total	£250,000

The amounts for rations and forage are, owing to the abnormally high transport rates, about treble what they would have been in an ordinary year; and mules too could have been purchased much cheaper but for the outbreak of rinderpest. A certain number of horses and mules, and nearly all the arms, equipments, and wagons, remain as an asset to the Company.

The pay of all ranks was of course extremely liberal, and throughout the campaign the Company treated officers and men with the greatest consideration and generosity.

Whether they have obtained an adequate return for all the expenditure on the war, can perhaps only be determined when it is seen whether the present cessation of hostilities is really a final surrender on the part of the Matabele, or whether they will only wait for a favourable opportunity to strike another blow for the recovery of the country. On this point prophecies are idle, and men best qualified to judge differ in opinion. It is quite certain that they will never again have the same combination of circumstances operating in their favour as they had in 1896. The small force of regular troops still remaining in Bulawayo will presumably shortly be withdrawn, but the present strength of the police force will certainly be maintained for some time to come, and with the forts carefully distributed over the country, and all the

officers in the different districts on the look-out for any signs of disaffection amongst the natives, there should be no possibility of the white population being taken by surprise. The new railway which is already within 200 miles of Bulawayo, and is bringing civilization daily nearer, will render comparatively easy the rapid despatch of reinforcements should they be required; and with the advent of the railway there will pour into the country a rapidly increasing white population. Whether the mineral resources of Matabeleland will justify their expectations is a matter the future alone can determine; but in any case the influx of prospectors and others will enormously increase the respect of the natives for the white man's power, and will do much to convince them of the hopelessness of any further struggle against it.

The Matabeleland Relief Force suffered many losses, inevitable it is true, but none the less deplorable; and the memory of our comrades who fell will always be cherished by all of us who served in the corps. We can only hope that the part the corps took in the suppression of the rebellion of 1896 will entitle us to rank with the other irregular corps who have figured so prominently in South African Campaigns.

CHAPTER XII.

AN ACCOUNT OF THE OPERATIONS IN WHICH THE MASHONALAND DETACHMENT OF THE M.R.F. WERE ENGAGED.

BY MAJOR C. N. WATTS.

ON the return of the Matabeleland Relief Force to Fort Khami, near Bulawayo, from the Guai Patrol on the 29th June, the news was received of the rebellion in Mashonaland. A few days later Sir Frederick Carrington detailed me to command a detachment of the M.R.F., with orders to march *via* Gwelo and Charter to Marandella's, on the Salisbury-Umtali road, which road we were to open up, building one or more forts at the Devil's Pass, etc.

It was at first intended that the Mashonaland detachment should consist of 150 to 200 men, with a Maxim, but we eventually left Bulawayo on foot, on the 3rd July, only 100 strong, and without a Maxim. We had to escort seven wagons of provisions for Gwelo, which, with our own six carrying 60 days' rations, made our convoy up to 13 wagons.

The composition of the column was as follows:—

Major C. N. Watts	. . .	in Command.
Lieutenant Macqueen,	M.M.P.	Adjutant
Sergt.-Major Willows,	M.M.P.	Sergeant-Major.
Lieutenant Harrell,	M.R.F.	Commanding A Troop.
„	Fordham, M.R.F.	„ B „
„	Masterton, M.R.F.	„ C „

Of the first part of the march there is little to relate, except that we got excellent shooting, and that our bag was not commensurate with our zeal.

We reached Gwelo on the 11th July, and on the 14th passed Fort Gibbs, a solid stone construction built by Captain Gibbs on the top of an impregnable rock (the Makalaka Kop). Iron Mile Hill was reached on the 15th, and Enkeldooru on the 18th, and on the 21st we arrived at Charter.

From this point matters became more interesting, as our route lay off the main road, and Mr. George Coleman, the owner of a farm near Charter, was engaged as a guide.

The march was resumed on the 22nd, and on the 23rd, after a reconnaissance in search of a party of natives reported to be in our vicinity, Trooper Hermiston lost his way, and notwithstanding all our efforts to trace him he was never again seen alive. On the following day Corporal Gilmore, who had had permission to go out shooting, also lost the column, but he managed,

fortunately, to strike the Charter road, and eventually made his way back there.

On the 26th we reached White's Farm, where the body of Lieutenant Bremner, 20th Hussars, was found in the house, with his horse lying dead outside. This officer was on leave from India, and had ridden from Umtali in the hopes of catching up the Natal troop of Volunteers which, under Captain Turner, 2nd West Riding Regiment, was on its way to Matabeleland, *via* Charter, when the Mashona rebellion broke out, and it was ordered to Salisbury. Lieutenant Bremner rode in one day from Marendella's to Charter, and there finding that the Natal troops had gone on to Salisbury, determined to ride back next day on the same and only available horse to Marendella's. He had evidently off-saddled to rest at White's Farm, on the return journey, when he was murdered. The body was lying half under a table in the dwelling-house, and from its position it appeared as if Bremner must have been suddenly attacked from behind. Some weeks later a letter written by White was found in the bush near the house, stating that the Mashonas had suddenly attacked him and Bremner, that the latter had been killed, and he himself was mortally wounded. White's body was never found. The natives had ransacked the whole place, but we got what we were so badly in want of—mule-feeds—taking three

wagon-loads of excellent forage from the stacks on the farm. Before leaving we buried poor Bremner in front of the house as decently as was possible under the circumstances.

Our first encounter with the Mashonas took place on the 28th July, during the forenoon. The mounted scouts under Corporal Brent fired on an armed party of about 40 natives, who retired into some neighbouring koppies.

During the midday outspan the officers and 15 men visited a kraal perched on an isolated mass of rocks in the centre of a valley. We had been told in Bulawayo that the Mashonas would never show fight, and so gaily explored the huts, caught fowls, and collected curios. When on the point of leaving, Sergeant-Major Willows caught sight of a low gateway in a stone wall, which barred the entrance between two large rocks, and as simultaneously we heard the bleating of goats on the other side of the wall, the Sergeant-Major and I went in, and found ourselves in a funnel-shaped passage leading down to a barricaded cave-mouth. We had hardly advanced more than a dozen yards when a family gun went off, accompanied by howls from natives in the cave. We flattened ourselves against our respective sides of the passage, while our men from the gateway and the Mashonas in the cave fired at each other, the bullets passing between Willows and myself.

This becoming monotonous, we bolted back under cover of a volley from the gate, and the time taken by us to get over that twelve yards and through the gate was a record. It was impossible to get into the cave without losing a good many men, as the only entrance was commanded for quite fifty yards, and we had no dynamite; so after a good deal of snapshooting on both sides we beat a rather ignominious retreat.

At 1.30 p.m. the march was resumed. We were now, according to the guide, about seven miles from the main road and Marendella's Store, and had evidently struck the natives, as a party estimated at 200 was seen moving on our right in the same direction as ourselves across a valley. Sergeant-Major Willows, Corporal Brent, and three picked men were sent ahead mounted as scouts. At two p.m., just as the head of the advance guard rounded a bend in the road, heavy firing was heard ahead of us. The side of a big koppie was covered with puffs of smoke, and a swarm of natives rushed down on the scouts, three of whom we could see were dismounted, while two riderless horses galloped in on us. The rest of B Troop, which furnished the advance guard, now doubled up, but could not open fire for fear of hitting the scouts, who were running towards us pursued by the natives. A very plucky action was now performed by Trooper Wynn, M.R.F., who

dashed forward to help the Sergeant-Major, who it was evident had been hurt, and brought him in. Fearing that the wagons would be "rushed," I laagered at once on open ground on the right of the road, with the mules and captured cattle inside the wagons, but by the time the laager was formed B Troop had opened fire from a ridge of rocks and to the right of it, driving the natives back into the rocks. As we were commanded by koppies, from which fire was soon opened, C Troop occupied a ridge of rocks, while A Troop closed in on the wagons.

So far the results were three horses shot, and two men of the scouts, Sergeant-Major Willows and Corporal Brent, badly shaken from their fall.

As the scouts, who had got as far as the neck when attacked, reported that the country beyond was very broken and covered with bush, and Marendella's Store was supposed to be five miles off, I decided not to force the pass that day, as it was now late in the afternoon.

Towards nightfall the enemy opened fire from a big koppie across the valley, and about 1000 yards from the laager. All night long we could hear the natives shouting, and the chopping of wood, which made me think we should find the road barricaded next morning. However, no attack took place at dawn, but a lively fire was opened on the wagons as soon as it became light.

At 7.30 a.m., on the 29th July, I sent Lieutenant Fordham and B Troop up the valley towards the neck, with Lieutenant Masterson and half C Troop in support about 300 yards in his right rear, while five picked shots—Troopers G. White, 7th Hussars; White, M.R.F.; Madden, M.R.F.; Crealock, M.R.F.; and Maclean, M.M.P.—slightly preceded him, and kept down the fire from the small koppies in the valley.

Lieutenant Hurrell and A Troop occupied ridges on our left, and the remainder of C Troop the laager.

Lieutenant Fordham's orders were to gain if possible the neck, and verify the reports of the scouts as to the country beyond, while Lieutenant Masterson covered his retreat in case of necessity. Although so far I had been lucky in having no men hit, the enemy's position was very strong, and his strength as near as we could estimate from 300 to 400 men. If the natives held on to the neck I had not enough men (with ninety head of cattle and twelve wagons to guard) to turn them out by assault. On the other hand, it was impossible to go back, as we should have had the whole country-side on us at once.

Fordham's and Masterson's advance up the valley was therefore watched with some anxiety, which was increased when the first wounded man, Trooper Eastwood, M.R.F., was carried back shot through

the chest, followed by Trooper Hamilton, M.R.F., shot through the hand. Our surgical and medical appliances were very meagre, and it speaks well for Sergeant Maloney, M.M.P.—in medical charge of the column—that Eastwood and Hamilton made a good recovery. A little later I heard that two more men were hit. B and half C Troop worked steadily towards the neck, which with the koppie on our right was held in force by the natives. All this time desultory firing was kept up on the wagons from koppies to our left. At 9.45 a.m. a report was received from Masterson, whose half-troop was lying down facing a koppie about midway between the laager and the neck, that the enemy was moving to the laager end of the koppie ; so, as I had only fifteen men available to defend the wagon, all the Cape Boys were fallen in and extended as skirmishers round them, with the troopers interspersed to keep up a dropping fire. The ruse succeeded, for much blowing of a horn ensued, and after an interval fire was reopened on Masterson.

At ten a.m. I went up the valley, accompanied by Troopers Siegert and Wynne, and on reaching Masterson was informed that the party of five men under Trooper White had cleared the small koppies, division one and division two, from which the natives had been keeping up flanking fire on Fordham. The latter by this time had got into the big

rocks on the neck, and on joining him I found that the country immediately beyond was perfectly open. I then sent back for the wagons, which came up at 10.30 a.m., Lieutenant Hurrell and A Troop bringing up the rear.

All opposition ceased when the neck was taken, the reason for which was clear when we got over it, as the road made a sharp turn almost at right angles to the right, and led to Marendella's Store (within three-quarters of a mile of us) and the open country.

The natives' position was excellently chosen, and if they had only held on to it we were not in sufficient force to have turned them out. Had I known, however, the previous day that the store and open ground were so close I would have pushed through at once. As things turned out, however, we were lucky in having no men killed, our casualties being four men wounded and three horses killed. The wounded men were Trooper Eastwood, M.R.F., severely, Winchester bullet through chest; Trooper Hamilton, M.R.F., slug through right hand (this wound gave a good deal of trouble some weeks later, and Hamilton had to be operated on in Umtali for the removal of splinters); Trooper White, 7th Hussars, hit by spent ball on the ankle; Trooper Wray, M.R.F., hit by spent bullet on the knee.

The last two named were not, properly speaking,

wounded, but were returned among the casualties. Sergeant-Major Willows remained much shaken from his fall of the previous day, and it was some time before he could get about.

The enemy's loss was put down at from fifty to sixty, but I ascertained later that twenty-five had been shot dead.

On approaching the store we saw the natives running in every direction, the bulk of them making for Marendella's old stronghold—a large mass of rocks standing alone, about two miles from the store, near the Salisbury road. The store itself was uninjured, but provisions of every description and empty bottles strewed the ground. The floor of the house and the yard were covered with flour, tea, and coffee, in which a large number of pigs were running riot.

As the house, a solid brick one with a garden wall about four feet high in front and on one side, lent itself admirably for defence, I decided to establish a post of thirty men there under Lieutenant Hurrell, and the next three days were spent in making this post defensible. On the 2nd August, leaving A Troop at the new fort with thirty days' provisions and eighty head of cattle, we resumed our march with the remainder, and on the following day, when approaching Botha's Farm, we saw a party of natives taking up their position among some rocks close to the road on

our left. The country being open on the right of the road, the wagons went on to the veldt and got past, covered by B Troop, which engaged the koppies. As we turned the corner of the road we saw the natives setting fire to Botha's Farm. Laager was formed about 700 yards from the koppies and close to the farm; but as the rebels found our range, and kept dropping bullets among the mules and wagons, Lieutenant Masterson, with fifteen men, went back and cleared the rocks. In this skirmish Trooper Crealock was slightly cut about the face with splinters of rock, and one mule was touched up with a spent pot-leg. On the 4th we arrived at Macheckie to find the buildings smoking. It was, therefore, a surprise when, on reaching Headlands on the 5th, we discovered the house and out-buildings intact; the usual scene of wreckage prevailed, however—made more serious in this case by the destruction of the telegraph instruments and plant. We had been without news of the outside world since leaving Charter on the 22nd July, but knew that Colonel Alderson's column was on its way up to Salisbury from Beira, and expected daily to meet it. On the morning of the 6th August, as the column approached Dedhas, a mass of koppies running at right angles to the road, the rocks ahead were seen to be lined with figures. The picked shots were sent ahead and the advance guard extended

to attack, when a white flag was waved with great energy by the supposed enemy, and a bugle sounded the cease fire. We had no bugle. Simultaneously a mounted white man rode out and informed us that Alderson's column was just ahead. Soon after I met Colonel Alderson himself and heard of his attack and defeat of Makoni. On meeting Colonel Alderson I assumed command of the line of communication, handing over charge of the Mashonaland detachment M.R.F. to Lieutenant Macqueen, who was ordered to send back twenty men to Marendella's with the Imperial troops. I accompanied the detachment down to Umtali, which we reached on the 12th August. There the men got a much-needed rest, as well as new clothes, and settled down comfortably at Ceytonu's Buildings to form part of the garrison of Umtali. Lieutenant Fordham left us on the 16th, being obliged to go to England on private affairs. On the 23rd August, in consequence of reports from the Native Commissioner that Makoni was again massing his men, though professing to be willing to surrender, I took forty men of the M.R.F. under Lieutenant Macqueen, mounted on horses which happened to be on their way up to Salisbury, to Fort Haynes, a spot about six miles from Makoni's kraal. It was from this place that Colonel Alderson had set out for his night march to surprise the kraal on the 4th

August, and here Captain Haynes, R.E., and the men killed in that attack, were brought back and buried. While the negotiations between Mr. Native Commissioner Ross and Makoni were in progress the following troops, taken from posts on the line of communication, were concentrated at Fort Haynes and Lerapi Drift:—

At Fort Haynes.

2nd West Riding Regiment—Captain Wood and seventy-three N.C.O.'s and men.

K.O.Y. Light Infantry—Captain Pease, attached to the West Riding.

Detachment Matabeleland Relief Force—Lieut. Macqueen, Sergeant-Major Willows, and forty N.C.O.'s and men.

Umtali Artillery—Lieutenant Fichtat and nine N.C.O.'s and men, with one 7-pr. gun.

Umtali Volunteers—Captain Tulloch, Lieutenant Cavendish, and twenty-eight N.C.O.'s and men.

At Lerapi Drift.

2nd West Riding Regiment—Captain Swanson, Lieutenant Coode, and forty-seven N.C.O.'s and men.

Headland's Troop of the Umtali Volunteers—Captain Kennedy and thirty-four N.C.O.'s and men.

Making a total of nine officers and 230 N.C.O.'s and men.

As Makoni had not given himself up by the evening of the 29th August, I marched from Fort Haynes at 1.30 a.m. on the 30th, leaving ten men at Lerapi Drift and six men at Fort Haynes as a garrison. Surgeon-Captain Hale, Army Medical Staff, at that time senior medical officer on the line of communication, and Doctor Lovell, in medical charge of the post at the Devil's Pass, accompanied the column. The kraal was reached at daybreak after a march of eight miles. On approaching it the force was divided into three portions: Captain Pease and 100 rifles (fifty West Riding, forty M.R.F., and ten Umtali Volunteers) moving to the west of the kraal, while the artillery, escorted by Captain Swanson and fifty West Riding, took up a position on the north, and Captain Wood and the remaining rifles occupied a commanding koppie on the east. The rocks on the west were held by Mashona pickets, which, however, retired into the stronghold on our approach.

A considerable number of natives were also seen running away to the eastward.

After a few shells had been fired into the kraal the outer walls, seven feet high and loopholed, were occupied by Captain Pease without opposition; but a steady fire was opened on the troops from the caves below directly they got down among the ruined huts and granaries burnt during Colonel Alderson's attack.

Strong pickets were then posted all round the place, and the 7-pr. was taken by Lieutenant Fichat inside the walls, where it came into action about one hundred yards from one of the principal cave-mouths, into which common shell was fired.

Captain Swanson, Lieutenant Coode, and fifty West Riding left for Salisbury at two p.m.

It now became a regular, or rather irregular siege, the Mashonas from their holes and caves potting at anyone who exposed himself, while a system of flying sap was employed on our side, a heavy fire being concentrated on dangerous spots, under cover of which either a barricade was rigged up or the covering shelter of some rock gained.

The several corps were told off for day and night pickets, the latter, owing to the large enceinte of the kraal, practically taking half the force, and we settled down in laager out of range of the kraal. This went on during the 31st August and 1st and 2nd September, the circle of investment being daily drawn closer as the Mashonas were driven by various devices from the outlying cave-mouths into the heart of the cup-shaped hollow. During the early hours of the 2nd September about thirty of Makoni's men broke through, knocking down a sentry and running over the sleeping picket. The same day 105 women and children gave themselves up,

creeping out of a small hole at the lower end of the kraal, and we learnt from the women that Makoni and 100 men still remained in one of the larger caves, and that food was running scarce.

That night, anticipating a big sortie, the whole of the force, except the quarter-guard, was placed on picket, partly inside the walls and partly on the low grounds to the east and south, while all the known exits from the caves had been previously barricaded with felled trees. At 7.30 p.m. the first attempt to break out was made on the south side, where a picket of the Umtali Volunteers under Captain Tulloch was posted; during this sortie Sergeant-Major Wood, U.V., was stabbed in the stomach. From this hour until two a.m. on the 3rd September repeated attempts were made by the Mashonas to break through, principally at the barricade held by Lieutenant Macqueen and the M.R.F. detachment. This barricade, about fifty yards in length, was constructed at the edge of a slope, thickly wooded, leading down to a cave-mouth one hundred yards distant. On our right front and one hundred feet higher was the 7-pr. and a party of West Riding, firing at right angles to ourselves, while facing us across the hollow and two hundred feet higher was a picket of the Umtali Volunteers—and the marvel is we didn't shoot each other.

Makoni himself, as afterwards transpired, tried early during the night to escape from the lowest point of the hollow, under cover of a rush on Macqueen's barricade, but was checked by Fichat's pickets. He then made attempts to parley, but warned by previous experience that an indaba with him meant treachery (for on three separate occasions when trying to induce him to surrender, promising to stop firing while negotiations were going on, had his men reoccupied lost positions and opened fire), I refused to listen. Owing doubtless to shortness of ammunition, the Mashonas had fired very seldom during the night, but warned by Native Commissioner Ross that they would use the assegai in breaking through, a party of about ten men (West Riding Regiment) was stationed with fixed bayonets behind Macqueen's M.R.F. to charge any who got away. At two a.m. on the 3rd September a report was received from the picket at the bottom of the kraal that Makoni had been captured near the entrance to a cave by Lieutenant Fichat, and amid great cheering as the news passed round he was brought up over the rocks strongly guarded, and taken to a tent outside the walls. He was tried and condemned to death the same day, and executed inside his kraal at noon on the 4th September, the firing party consisting of two men from each corps present. Directly Makoni was buried I caused all the walls and fortifications

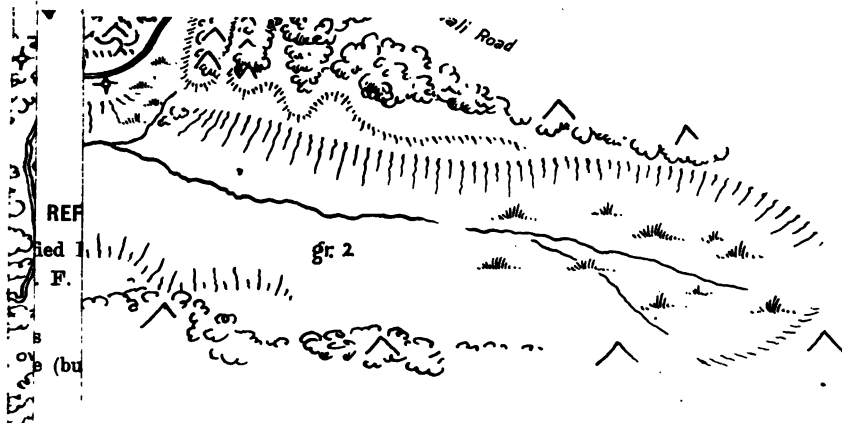
to be demolished by natives of Indafuniya's tribe, of whom Makoni had been the overlord or paramount chief.

These natives, supposed to be friendly, had been present in daily increasing numbers since the second day of the siege, and though eager enough to carry away Makoni's grain, which they were allowed to do, did not show much enthusiasm for the fight. Our casualties during the affair were surprisingly few, namely :—Sergeant-Major Wood, Umtali Volunteers, stabbed ; one native shot through the neck and face ; one native shot through the foot.

In addition to Makoni about thirty men and 105 women and children were captured. The prisoners' statements as to their losses were very conflicting, and owing to the fall of rocks complete investigation of the caves was rendered impossible.

The Field Force broke up on the 5th September, the M.R.F. returning to Umtali.

In October Lieutenant Masterson and twenty men formed part of a patrol under Captain Tulloch which marched from Umtali to Marendella's, and was present at the destruction of Gatz's kraal ; but with this exception no more active operations were undertaken by the detachment, which was disbanded in November on the arrival of the new Rhodesian Mounted Police.



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WM. M. CREALOCK, M.R.F.

APPENDICES

APPENDIX A.

FORM OF OATH.

I, _____, do promise and swear that I will be faithful and bear true allegiance to Her Majesty QUEEN VICTORIA, and to her heirs and successors according to law, and that I will faithfully serve in the Matabeleland Relief Force for such period as my services may be required, and that I will perform the duties assigned to me to the best of my ability under the provisions of the Colonial Forces Act of 1892, and subject to such Rules and Regulations as may now be in force or may from time to time be promulgated under the said Act, and I understand that my enrolment in the aforesaid Matabeleland Relief Force does not entitle me to any permanent employment, and that I shall receive pay at the rate of 7s. 6d. per diem, and that I shall be supplied with all necessary equipment free of all expense to myself, and that on the disbanding of the said Matabeleland Relief Force all such equipment shall remain the property of the British South Africa Company.

Signed

Witness.....

Date.....

APPENDIX B.

LIST OF GOVERNMENT STORES

PURCHASED BY BRITISH SOUTH AFRICA COMPANY.

STORES.	No.
Rifles, M.-H., with bayonets, etc. etc.	1280
Butt swivels for M.I.	500
Implements, action	8
Pistols, '455	38
Bandoliers	583
Bottles, water, with straps	500
Pistol cases, lanyards, and pouches	20
Slings, rifle	600
Sheets, ground	1000
Tents, circular, double linen	30
Buckets, rifle	550
Saddling sets, M.I., without buckets, complete	400
Farriers' tools, sets of 4	3
Saddlers' tools, sets	5
Cartridges, } M.-H.	220,400
} S.A. ball { Pistol	3164
Gun ammunition—2½" R.M.L., rounds complete	200
Blankets, G.S.	350

Signalling Stores.

Flags, large and small, with poles	24
Fog horns	2
Heliographs	8
Lamps	10
Limelight apparatus, sets	2
Message books	36
Telescopes, with stands	4
Bugles, with strings	3

Clothing, etc.

STORES.	No.
Bags, clothes	650
Boots, ankle, pairs	250
Caps, blue worsted	400
Capes	200
Cloaks and belts	247
Coats, great, grey	500
Haversacks	700
Jerseys, woollen	500
Pants, Bedford cord	340
Putties, pairs	600
Spurs, jack	383
Tins, mess, mounted men	398

APPENDIX C.

LIST OF KIT AND EQUIPMENT

ISSUED TO EACH N.C.O. AND TROOPER OF THE
MATABELE RELIEF FORCE.

Tunic	.	.	.	.	.	.	1
Pants	.	.	.	.	.	.	1
Hat	.	.	.	.	.	.	1
Puggaree	.	.	.	.	.	.	1
Boots, ammunition, pair	.	.	.	.	.	.	1
Putties	.	.	.	.	.	.	1
Spurs	.	.	.	.	.	.	1
Socks	.	.	.	.	.	.	2
Shirt	.	.	.	.	.	.	1
Holdall	.	.	.	.	.	.	1
Cap, worsted	.	.	.	.	.	.	1
*Cloak, cavalry, with cape and belt	.	.	.	.	.	.	1
Haversack	.	.	.	.	.	.	1
Water bottle and carrier, each	.	.	.	.	.	.	1
Kit bag	.	.	.	.	.	.	1
Waterproof sheet	.	.	.	.	.	.	1
Blankets	.	.	.	.	.	.	2
Knife and fork, each	.	.	.	.	.	.	1
Plate	.	.	.	.	.	.	1
Spoon	.	.	.	.	.	.	1
Pannikin	.	.	.	.	.	.	1
*Great-coat, infantry	.	.	.	.	.	.	1

* Either one or the other.

Saddle	I
Bridle	I
Reins	2
Girths	I
Stirrup leathers, pair	I
„ irons „	I
Wallets „	I
Bit	I
Bucket, rifle	I
Straps, cloak	2
„ centre	I
„ wallet	2
Headstall and reins	I
Numnah	I
Nosebag	I
Curry comb and brush	I
Patrol tin and case	I
Surcingle	I
Head rope	I

Arms.

Rifle and sling	I
Bandolier	I
Sight protector	I
Oil bottle	I
Jag	I

APPENDIX D.

GRAIN ISSUED TO RELIEF FORCE
EN ROUTE.

1.— <i>Pitsani.</i>		lbs.	8.— <i>Suswani.</i>		lbs.
Chaff . . .		600	Oats . . .		450
Forage . . .		4128	Mealies . . .		6800
Oats . . .		7350	Forage . . .		7700
Mealies . . .		8800			
2.— <i>Sandpits.</i>			9.— <i>Lokala.</i>		
Oats . . .		11,550	Oats . . .		5700
Mealies . . .		7000	Mealies . . .		10,890
Forage . . .		4550	Forage . . .		2800
3.— <i>Asvogels Kop.</i>			10.— <i>Palla.</i>		
Oats . . .		6000	Oats . . .		29,850
Mealies . . .		2400	Mealies . . .		6150
Forage . . .		11,900	Forage . . .		700
4.— <i>Ramoutsa.</i>			11.— <i>Wegdraai.</i>		
Forage . . .		12,600	Oats . . .		5550
Oats . . .		3780	12.— <i>Silika.</i>		
Mealies . . .		3400	Oats . . .		12,150
5.— <i>Gaberones.</i>			13.— <i>Lotsane.</i>		
Mealies . . .		11,000	Oats . . .		12,150
Oats . . .		11,102	14.— <i>Maquicha.</i>		
Forage . . .		14,708	Oats . . .		12,000
Chaff . . .		1½ bales	15.— <i>Marapong.</i>		
6.— <i>Mochudi.</i>			Oats . . .		10,200
Mealies . . .		10,900	Forage . . .		1900
Oats . . .		300	16.— <i>Macloutsi.</i>		
Forage . . .		4550	Mealies . . .		116,360
Chaff . . .		1 bale	Oats . . .		29,700
7.— <i>Kalakani.</i>			Forage . . .		7530
Oats . . .		1550	<i>Palapye.</i> Issued to scouts.		
Mealies . . .		9000	Mealies . . .		3600
Forage . . .		4200	<i>Shashi.</i>		
			Oats . . .		6000
			Mealies . . .		6000

APPENDIX E.

SCALE OF RATIONS AUTHORIZED BY
B.S.A. COMPANY.

The B.S.A. Company have three classes of rations, viz.,
A, Whites ; B, Cape Boys ; C, Natives ; the daily portions
being as follows :—

A.

Meat (fresh), or	.	.	.	.	1 lb.
„ (tinned)	.	.	.	.	1 $\frac{1}{4}$ „
Flour	.	.	.	.	2 „
Salt	.	.	.	.	3 ozs.
Coffee	.	.	.	.	2 „
Tea	.	.	.	.	1 „
*Vegetables (fresh), or	.	.	.	.	3 „
„ (tinned)	.	.	.	.	2 „
Split peas or rice, alternative	.	.	.	.	1 „
Sugar	.	.	.	.	3 „
Lime juice	.	.	.	.	$\frac{1}{32}$ quart.
Dop (Cape brandy)	.	.	.	.	$\frac{1}{32}$ „
Tobacco and soap when obtainable.					

* We never of course had fresh vegetables, and not very often
tinned ones, and we very seldom had dop or tobacco issued, but
were hardly ever without lime juice.

B.

Meat	.	.	.	.	1 lb.
Meal	.	.	.	.	1 „
Coffee	.	.	.	.	2 ozs.
Sugar	.	.	.	.	2 „
Salt	.	.	.	.	$\frac{1}{2}$ „

C.

Meal	.	.	.	.	2 lbs.
Salt	.	.	.	.	$\frac{1}{2}$ oz.

APPENDIX F.

NUMBER OF WAGONS AND MULES WITH
THE DIFFERENT DETACHMENTS.

DETACHMENT.	No. OF WAGONS.	No. OF MULES.	No. OF DONKEYS.
No. 1 . . .	3	42	—
„ 2 . . .	2	28	—
„ 3 . . .	2	28	—
„ 4 . . .	2	28	—
„ 5 . . .	3	42	—
„ 6 . . .	2	28	—
„ 7 . . .	3	42	—
„ 8 . . .	2	28	—
„ 9 . . .	2	28	—
Signallers and medical	1	14	—
No. 10 . . .	3	42	—
Scouts . . .	1	14	—
Maxims . . .	5	70	—
No. 11 . . .	2	28	—
Dismounted . . .	2	—	36
No. 22 . . .	2	28	—
„ 13 . . .	3	42	—
„ 14 . . .	5	70	—
Total	45	602	36

SUPPLIES AND STORES

CARRIED ON THE TWO WAGONS WHICH ACCOMPANIED EACH
DETACHMENT OF 50 MEN AND APPROXIMATE STORES.

	lbs.
30 days' rations for 50 men . . .	5500
Drivers' kits and rations . . .	550
Rations for 60 horses for 1 day . . .	480
„ „ 30 mules „ „ . . .	120

APPENDIX F.

245

	lbs.
Men's kits	1000
250 rounds ammunition per man	2000
2 tarpaulins	330
Officers' kits, etc.	100
Hospital stores (a)	40
Wagon equipment and tools for repairing harness (b).	200
Cooking utensils (c)	200
Sundries (d)	1000

11,520

These weights would of course diminish daily as the rations decreased.

(a) HOSPITAL STORES.

6 botls. Quinine.	12 botls. Chlorodyne.
6 „ Wanburg's Tincture.	12 „ Epsom Salts.
6 boxes Cockle's Pills.	6 „ Vaseline.
3 botls. Elliman's Embrocation.	1 doz. Bandages.
1 „ Iodoform.	1 lb. Zinc ointment.
12 „ Carbolic oil.	$\frac{1}{4}$ „ Fuller's Earth.
	8 ft. Sticking plaster.

(b) WAGON EQUIPMENT AND TOOLS FOR REPAIRING HARNESS.

2 Water vaagtes.	2 Taps.
2 Adzes and handles.	2 Wrenches.
2 14-lb. kegs of grease.	Rivets.
3 Drums of tar.	Rasp and knife.
2 Hammers.	30 Nosebags.
2 Gimlets.	3 Lanterns.
2 Hatchets.	6 Packets of candles.
2 Saws.	

(c) COOKING UTENSILS.

5 8-gallon pots.	6 Billies.
3 Gridirons.	2 Buckets.

(d) SUNDRIES.

1 Empty hogshead.	6 Picks.
1 Picket line (50 yards).	12 Sickles.
2 Long picket pegs.	6 Hatchets.
2 Short " "	2 Spades.
*50 Reims.	2 Heavy hammers.
15 Headstalls.	50 lbs. Coarse salt.
12 Girths.	25 " Dubbin.
25 lbs. Horse-shoes.	25 " Soft soap.
2 " Nails.	Oil.
50 Sponges.	

* Strips of hide, in common use in South Africa.

APPENDIX G.

KIT CARRIED BY EACH MAN FROM
MACLOUTSI ONWARDS.*On the Saddle.*

- (a) Great-coat over wallets.
- (b) One blanket on back of saddle. Nothing packed inside coat or blanket.
- (c) In the wallets—1 shirt, 1 pair socks, curry comb and brush, razor, soap, and any other small articles.
- (d) On off side of saddle—axe and spare reim.
- (e) On near side of saddle—patrol tin and nosebag with feed.

On the Man.

Rifle and bandolier with 50 rounds ; on right side—water bottle ; on left side—haversack.

With the Wagon.

One blanket, waterproof sheet.

APPENDIX H.

ITINERARY OF MARCH FROM MACLOUTSI
TO MANGWE.

- 1st day—To Shashi River, 33 miles.
- 2nd day—To a point about two miles N. of the junction with the Tuli road, 18 miles.
- 3rd day—To Montgomery's Farm, 26 miles.
- 4th day—To a point about 20 miles from Montgomery's Farm.
- 5th day—To Mangwe, 22 miles.

APPENDIX I.

FORM OF LAAGER ON GUAI PATROL.

There were sixteen wagons with the column.

Fig. 1 shows the laager as formed for the night.

„ 2 „ the method of coming into laager.

„ 3 „ „ „ breaking laager.

The advanced guard formed the front face, the main body the flanks, and the rear guard the rear face of the laager.

Each squadron had a wagon for its kit and ammunition, and this wagon was always placed on the front to be defended by that squadron.

Each squadron had its own picket rope, and these were fixed to front face No. 1, right flank No. 2, left flank No. 3, rear face No. 4.

Only four picket ropes were required ; but as each rope had to accommodate about 110 horses, the wagons were necessarily set rather widely apart.

The men slept outside the wagons, behind their saddles ; but in cases of alarm certain men were told off to occupy each wagon.

Maxims were posted at the corners of the laager.

The mules were always tethered to the dessilbooms* of the wagons they drew.

* Poles.

Fig. 1. Appendix J

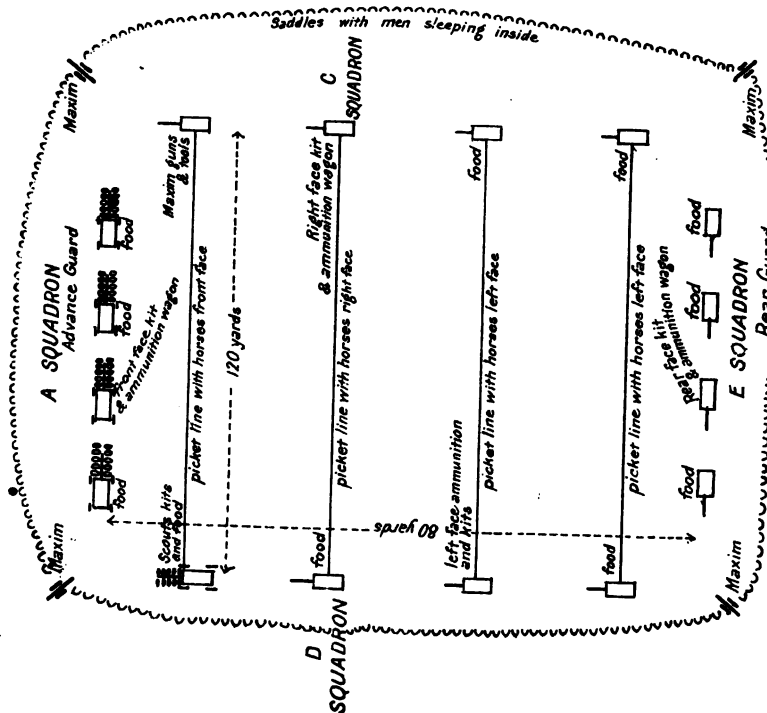


Fig. II.

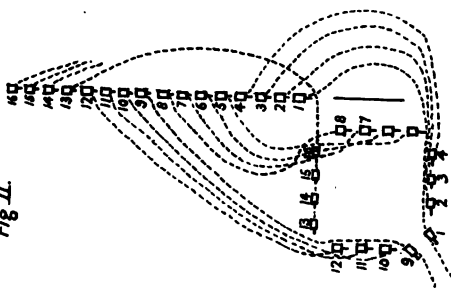
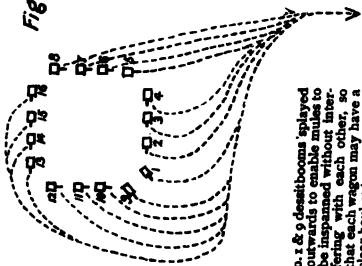


Fig. III.



No. 1 & 9 desatibonous 'played out' and the mules to be insured with the other, interfering with each other so that each wagon may have a clear haul out.

APPENDIX K.

INSTRUCTIONS.

Wagons will always come into and leave laager in the same succession.

About half an hour before going into laager the following parties will fall out and proceed ahead of the column to the place where the force will laager, which will be selected by Major Bodle, Capt. Beresford, and the Adjutant :—

Cossack posts, Orderly officer,
 Water guard,

One N.C.O. and two men per squadron.

On the site for the laager being selected, the Adjutant will fall in the Cossack posts and hand them over to Capt. Beresford, who, accompanied by the orderly officer, will proceed to post them in suitable positions round the laager.

The Adjutant will select the watering-places for—

- (1) drinking,
- (2) horses and mules,
- (3) bathing,

and will post the sentries with the necessary orders.

The Adjutant will place the squadron markers in position that their squadrons are to take up in the laager, and will send the N.C.O. back to his squadron to explain to the O.C. squadron where he is to take up his position.

Each squadron on its arrival will take up a position opposite its place in the laager, and will dismount and await the sounding of the "Advance." Major Bodle, assisted by the Transport Officer, will then bring the wagons into

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position, care being taken that each wagon is placed in accordance with the plan.

As soon as all the wagons are in position, the "Advance" will be sounded, when each squadron will move independently to its own place in the laager, off-saddle, and hand the horses over to the horse guard. Saddles will be carefully placed in line 20 yards outside the wagons, rifles and bandoliers being laid beside the saddles. A fatigue party from each squadron will at once fix picket ropes.

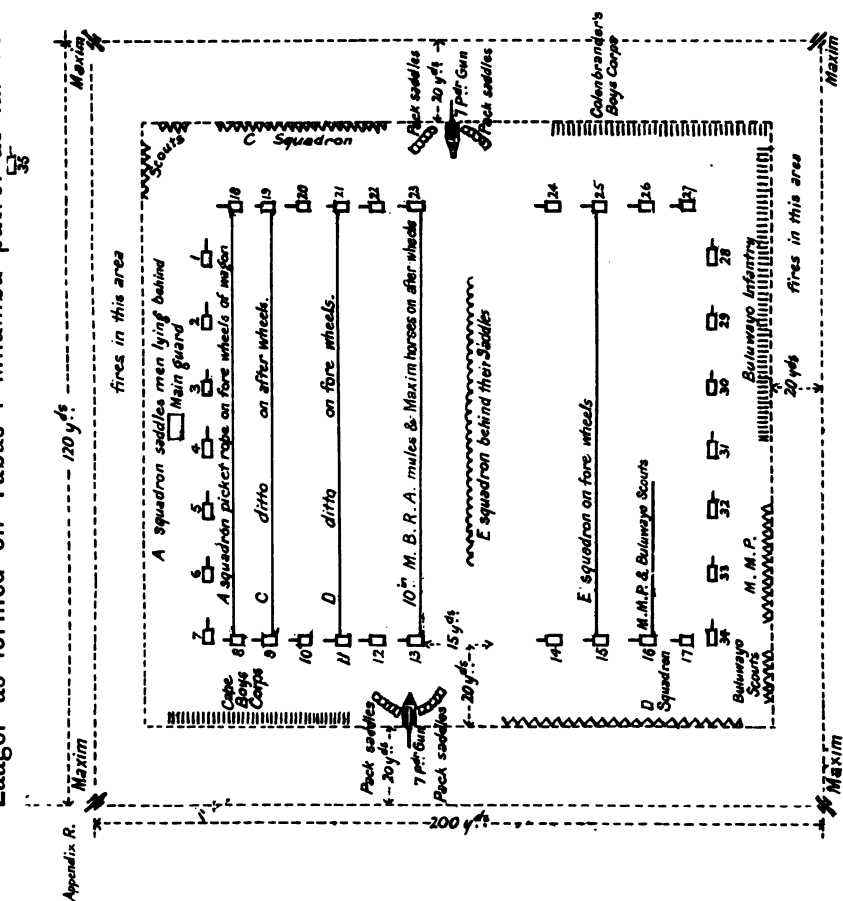
The Adjutant will sound "Orderly Sergeants," when all further instructions will be given.

The "Dismiss" will then sound.

One hour after coming into laager "Rations" will be sounded, when squadron orderlies will attend the Adjutant to draw the rations.

Butcher.—As soon as the laager is formed, the butcher will commence to slaughter and cut up the necessary fresh meat, under the directions of the Quartermaster-Sergeant.

Laager as formed on Tabas i Mhamba patrol as far as Inyati.



- Waggons
- MP
- 1} Provisions
 - 2} Officers
 - 3} A Squadron
 - 4} Officers
 - 5} Provisions
 - 6} Cape Boys
 - 7} Provisions
 - 8} Tools, &c., &c.
 - 9} R. A.
 - 10} D Squadron
 - 11} E Squadron
 - 12} Grain
 - 13} Hospital
 - 14} Scouts
 - 15} C Squadron
 - 16} Provisions
 - 17} Maxims
 - 18} R. A.
 - 19} Colenbrander's Boys
 - 20} Provisions
 - 21} Grain
 - 22} Hospital
 - 23} M. M. P.
 - 24} Bulawayo F. F.
 - 25} Bulawayo F. F.
 - 26} Mr. Rhodes

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